

Novel Coronavirus: What Child Care Programs Need to Know

2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Health officials worldwide are responding quickly to a newly discovered respiratory virus called novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) that first emerged in China. The City is monitoring this outbreak closely and working with our partners at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prepare should an ill person arrive in New York City. Although the situation continues to evolve, the current risk to New Yorkers is low. This guidance document provides information about coronaviruses and how infections from respiratory viruses can be prevented.

About Coronaviruses

Coronaviruses are known to cause the common cold in humans. There are other families of coronaviruses that affect animals, including camels and bats. Rarely, a coronavirus – like SARS and MERS and the current 2019-nCoV – can be transmitted from animals to humans and then spread among humans.

Transmission

Human coronaviruses are most commonly spread from an infected person to others through:

- Coughing or sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands

Symptoms for 2019-nCoV can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Symptoms of this virus are associated with travel to affected areas in the 14 days before symptoms onset. Visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) for the latest information on affected areas.

General Infection Prevention Strategies

While the risk to New Yorkers is considered low at this time, staff at child care programs should continue to routinely employ infection prevention strategies that can prevent transmission of common respiratory viruses such as the flu or a cold:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Isolate any child who appears ill and contact the child's parent or guardian to arrange for pick-up.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and help children in your care do the same. In the absence of a tissue, cough or sneeze into your shirt sleeve or bent arm (not your hands).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and help children do the same. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- Get the flu shot. (At this time, there is no vaccination for coronaviruses.)

At this time the Health Department is not recommending the use of face masks unless directed by a health care provider.

When cleaning a hard surface (e.g., a counter or table) used by a person who is ill:

- Wear disposable gloves
- Discard gloves after cleaning
- Wipe down frequently touched surfaces with an EPA-registered low- or intermediate-level disinfectant (products with label claims against human coronaviruses should be used according to label instructions)
- Use soap and water to wash hands after cleaning. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand wash, provided that hands are not visibly soiled.
- If visibly soiled (e.g., vomit), follow your routine exposure control plan.

Employing these routine infection prevention strategies is important and can help prevent transmission of respiratory viruses, including the novel coronavirus.