



**Office of the
Chief Medical
Health Officer**

January 16, 2020

Novel Coronavirus "2019-nCoV" Outbreak in Wuhan, China

An outbreak of 43 laboratory confirmed cases of atypical pneumonia due to a novel coronavirus (now officially named "2019-nCoV") has been reported in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. 2019-nCoV is a new coronavirus belonging to the same coronavirus family as SARS-CoV.

Clinical Presentation: Reported clinical signs and symptoms are mainly fever and dry cough with bilateral lung infiltrates on chest radiograph. Some patients report shortness of breath or chest tightness. About 15-20% of cases have been critically ill with two deaths reported. Some of the cases had exposure to a seafood market in Jiangnan District which also sold other live animals (e.g. bats, birds, snakes, marmots) but a definitive link is not established.

Transmission: Thus far, there is no clear evidence for easy or sustained human-to-human transmission among close contacts or health care workers. However, limited human-to-human transmission cannot be ruled out.

Suspect cases: Although the risk to Canadians is considered low, to facilitate early detection and containment clinicians should remain alert for possible disease importation by identifying patients with:

- fever AND acute respiratory illness (with or without pneumonia) **AND**
- recent travel to Wuhan, China within 14 days prior to symptom onset, **OR** another potential relevant exposure (e.g., close contact with someone who was ill and had recently travelled to Wuhan)

Clinicians should notify their Medical Health Officer as soon as possible for guidance in the investigation and management of patients with compatible symptoms and travel history. See contact numbers on the left of this page.

Diagnostic testing requires notification and consultation with the **local Medical Health Officer and Island Health Medical Microbiologist**. Upper and lower respiratory as well as stool, urine and serum specimens are requested where feasible. A reminder that any **severe** respiratory illness occurring in recent travellers should be worked up fully as 2019-nCoV is only one of many potential, more common pathogens.

Infection Control: All patients with respiratory symptoms should use droplet precautions when in a healthcare facility including clinics and physician offices. This includes wearing a surgical mask, and regular hand hygiene. Healthcare providers should also use contact and droplet precautions during specimen collection and assessment of patients; additionally, an N95 mask and eye protection should be donned during specimen collection (or other procedures) that may be associated with aerosol generation (e.g. nasopharyngeal aspirate).

**NORTH ISLAND
250.331.8591**

Charmaine Enns
MD, MHSc, FRCPC
355-11th Street
Courtenay, BC V9N 1S4

**CENTRAL ISLAND
250.739.6304**

Paul Hasselback
MD, MSc, FRCPC
3rd Floor 6475 Metral Drive
Nanaimo, BC V9T 2L9

**COWICHAN AREA
250.850.2100**

Local 45528
Shannon Waters
MD MHSc FRCPC
601-222 Cowichan Way
Duncan, BC V9L 6P4

**SOUTH ISLAND
250.519.3406**

Richard Stanwick, CMHO
MD, MSc, FRCPC, FAAP

Murray Fyfe
MD, MSc, FRCPC

Dee Hoyano
MD, FRCPC

430 -1900 Richmond Ave.
Victoria, BC V8R 4R2

**After Hours On Call
1.800.204.6166**

We are continually monitoring the situation in China and domestically. As additional relevant information becomes available, we will update you accordingly.

Dee Hoyano, MD, FRCPC, CCFP
Medical Health Officer