

# STAND-UP TALK

epar®

## Let's Talk About the Current Coronavirus Outbreak

### WHAT ARE CORONAVIRUSES?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some cause illness in humans, and others cause illness in animals, such as bats, camels, and civets.

Human coronaviruses generally cause mild illness, such as the common cold.

Rarely, animal coronaviruses can evolve to infect and spread among humans, causing severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) which emerged in 2002, and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) which emerged in 2012.

A novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

### WHAT IS THE CURRENT CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK?

There is a new coronavirus, with a majority of cases affecting people in Hubei Province, China. There is much more to learn about how it is spread, its severity, and other features and investigations are ongoing. At the moment, this coronavirus is called '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV'.

It is closely related to SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) coronavirus and in the same family as MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome) coronavirus.

### HOW IS THE VIRUS SPREAD AND CAN I CATCH IT?

Coronavirus experts think that it's likely that the novel coronavirus originated in an animal species, and then spread to humans. Person to person spread of the novel coronavirus is occurring, but it is not yet understood how easily this happens.

Human coronavirus strains are spread from person to person through contaminated droplets from a person who is sick with the illness (through coughing or sneezing) or contaminated hands, and generally occurs between people who are in close contact with one another. It is likely this novel coronavirus spreads the same way.

The novel coronavirus does not appear to last very long on surfaces. The risk of this virus being present on imported packages or products is negligible.

The best way to protect yourself is the same as you would against any respiratory infection. Practice good hygiene by making sure to clean your hands thoroughly with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub;

cover your nose and mouth when coughing; sneeze with tissue or a flexed elbow; avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.

**TIP: For hand washing technique refer to the epar Stand-up Talk on hand hygiene email 28/1/2020**

### IS THE VIRUS BEING TRANSMITTED FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER?

There have been a small number of cases of transmission from person to person occurring outside of mainland China. As of this morning, 6 February 2020, 14 cases of 2019-nCoV have been confirmed in Australia: 4 in New South Wales, 4 in Victoria, 4 in Queensland, and 2 in South Australia. All of the cases in Australia have come from Wuhan except one in NSW who had contact in China with a confirmed case in Wuhan.

### CAN THE VIRUS BE TRANSMITTED DURING THE INCUBATION PERIOD?

There is preliminary evidence of a very small number of people who may have been infectious before their symptoms developed. More information about this new virus is needed in order to understand when a person becomes infectious.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Cases have had fever and/or cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia with severe acute respiratory distress.

### IS THERE A CURE OR VACCINE?

There is no specific treatment. Early diagnosis and general supportive care are important. Most of the time, symptoms will resolve on their own. People who have serious disease with complications can be cared for in hospital. Currently there are no available vaccines that protect against coronaviruses.

### I HAVE SYMPTOMS. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you have travelled to or transited through mainland China (excluding Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan) in the 14 days before your symptoms started, and you have a fever and/or respiratory symptoms, please call your doctor, or your local Emergency.

Tell the person when you call that you have been in mainland China.



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### Stand Up Talk Meeting Outline

1	<b>FOLLOW UP</b>	Follow-up on any outstanding issues from the previous meeting.
2	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	Briefly introduce the topic (in 1-2 minutes) for employees.
3	<b>ADVISE</b>	Internationally, approximately 24,557 confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV, and 492 deaths have been reported - a 2.0% fatality rate.
4	<b>ADVISE</b>	<b>Tips for protection:</b> <b>Maintain social distancing</b> Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and other people, particularly those who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever. Why? When someone who is infected with a respiratory disease, like 2019-nCoV, coughs or sneezes they project small droplets containing the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the virus. <b>Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth</b> Why? Hands touch many surfaces which can be contaminated with the virus. If you touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your contaminated hands, you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself.
5	<b>ADVISE</b>	Wearing a medical mask can help limit the spread of some respiratory disease. However, using a mask alone is not guaranteed to stop infections and should be combined with other prevention measures including hand and respiratory hygiene and avoiding close contact - at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and other people.
6	<b>ADVISE</b>	The National Coronavirus Health Information Line is live on 1800 020 080, providing public health and situation informational. The line operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It will refer requests for medical advice to registered nurses on Healthdirect - 1800 022 222.
7	<b>NOTES</b>	Note any issues that require follow-up.
8	<b>THANKS</b>	Thank everyone for their time and attention.