NH DIVISION OF Public Health Services
Department of Health and Human Services

Bureau of Infectious Disease Control

Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions

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The purpose of this document is to provide public health and community partners with frequently asked questions and answers that may be used to assist in responding to inquiries from their communities.

PLEASE NOTE: New information appears in orange text.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is a novel Coronavirus?
A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness like the common cold. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with the common coronaviruses. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

Where did the COVID-19 virus come from?
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people, and others cause illness in animals. Rarely, animal coronaviruses infect people and then can spread person to person. This occurred for the viruses that cause Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 1 (SARS-CoV-1), and probably occurred for the virus that causes COVID-19. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

Is the COVID-19 virus the same as the MERS-CoV or SARS-CoV-1 virus?
No. The coronavirus causing COVID-19 is similar to *but not the same* as SARS-CoV-1 that caused the SARS epidemic in 2002 and the MERS Co-V that emerged in 2012. This is important because SARS-CoV-1 and MERS-CoV cause much more serious illness. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

Will warm weather stop the outbreak of COVID-19?
It is not yet known if weather and temperature will impact the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Some other viruses, like the common cold and flu, spread more during cold weather months but people can still become sick with these viruses during other months. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

ILLNESS AND SYMPTOMS

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?
Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and, in severe cases, difficulty breathing. Read more about the symptoms of COVID-19 here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

How sick are people with COVID-19?
Most people infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 will have no symptoms or mild symptoms. But some (especially those older than 60 years or with other medical conditions) may develop severe illness and even die.

Everywhere I go people are coughing. How do I know they don't have this new virus?
There are many other infections that cause fever and cough. Everyone should try to prevent getting sick from any of these infections and COVID-19 by usual but effective methods described below. If you are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, due to age >60 or because you have other chronic medical conditions, it is especially important that you take these steps as shown below.

Am I at high risk for serious illness or dying if I get this virus?
If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19, it is extra important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of getting this infection. People who are at higher risk of getting very sick from this infection include:

- Older adults, such as those older than 60 years old.
- People with other chronic medical conditions like:
    - Heart disease
    - Diabetes
    - Lung disease

What should I do right now if I am high risk for getting COVID-19?
Prevent getting infected during the COVID-19 epidemic:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Keep your hands clean.
    - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.
    - If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
    - To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
    - Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your nose, eyes, and mouth.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently-touched surfaces in your environment (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilet handles, faucets, sinks and cell phones).
- Avoid crowds, especially in poorly-ventilated spaces.
- Avoid all non-essential travel including plane trips and cruise ships.

Stay home as much as possible:

- Consider ways of getting household items and food brought to your house through family, social, or commercial networks
- Contact your healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra necessary prescription medications in case you need to stay home for a prolonged period of time.
    - If you cannot get extra medications, consider using mail-order for medications.
- Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies to treat fever and other symptoms.
    - Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.

Have a plan in case you get sick:

- Consult with your healthcare provider for more information about monitoring your health for symptoms suggestive of COVID-19**.**
- Stay in touch with others by phone or email. You may need to ask for help from friends, family, neighbors, community health workers, etc. if you become sick.
- Determine who can provide you with care if your own caregiver gets sick.

Is there a treatment for COVID-19?
People sick with COVID-19 can receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms, such as taking pain or fever medications, drinking plenty of fluids, and resting. Most people sick with COVID-19 can stay at home. Some patients who are very sick may need to go to the hospital.

What if think I might have COVID-19?
If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, you should call ahead to your healthcare professional. Your healthcare professional will determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19. https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm

When can I go back to work after a respiratory illness/suspect COVID-19?
Any person with COVID-19 compatible symptoms who is not tested and can be managed at home (i.e., does not require hospitalization) should be instructed to self-isolate until:

At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared	**AND**	At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery*

**Recovery is defined as a resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms.*

HOW THE VIRUS SPREADS

Can someone who has COVID-19 spread it to others?
Yes. The virus mainly spreads from person to person through small droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes and then these droplets land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within about 6 feet). The virus can also get on a sick person's hand and then they can infect someone when they shake another person's hand. That is why you should keep your hands clean and avoid touching your own face.
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/transmission.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Ftransmission.html

How else is COVID-19 spread?
Besides the main person-to-person way described above, it is possible that a surface can become dirty with the virus from an infected person. The virus can then survive for a short period of time on that surface. If a person touches that dirty surface, that person can infect themselves by transferring the virus to their own nose, mouth, or eyes. This is much less common than from direct person-to-person contact, but it is why we are recommending frequent hand hygiene and cleaning surfaces that sick people may have coughed on or touched, like handrails.

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?
People are most contagious when they are most symptomatic (that is, have the most symptoms). Less commonly, people may spread the COVID-19 virus in the hours before they realize they are getting sick, but this is not the main way the virus spreads.

Does the virus spread easily?
Since the first cases in China in December, the virus that causes COVID-19 has now become global (a "pandemic"). It is spreading in communities all over the United States. **Community spread** means people have been infected with the virus but may not have the usual risks of international travel or known contact with a confirmed case, so are not sure how or where they became infected. https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm

How long does COVID-19 survive on paper and other material?
The virus that causes COVID-19 transmits by respiratory droplets. Its ability to survive on paper has not been studied. There are studies of experimental contamination that show the virus can survive for hours and, in some cases, days. This is another reason why hand hygiene is so important. It may be possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touch their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Routine cleaning and disinfection can also help prevent the spread of COVID-19 through surfaces.

Can the virus that causes COVID-19 be spread through food, including refrigerated or frozen foods?
Eating contaminated food is not a significant source of infection. Coronaviruses do not survive long on surfaces, so there is very low risk of spread from food products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient, refrigerated, or frozen temperatures. Coronaviruses mostly spread from person to person through respiratory droplets, as described above. It is always good practice to wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before preparing or eating food. Learn more what is known about the spread of COVID-19.

TESTING

Who should be tested for COVID-19?
As COVID-19 becomes more common in our communities, testing every person presenting with mild symptoms of fever or respiratory illness becomes impractical and does not change how a person's illness is managed. Therefore, DHHS recommends:

People who are 60 years of age and older or those with chronic medical problems are at higher risk for hospitalization and death from COVID-19 and should:

- Stay at home and away from public places.
- Avoid any domestic or international travel.
- Call a provider if you are experiencing symptoms. If not severely ill, please call ahead before showing up at a hospital or emergency department.

People who have mild symptoms of COVID-19, even if not tested, should stay home until:

At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared	**AND**	At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery*

**Recovery is defined as a resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms.*

People who do not have symptoms but have been notified that they may have been exposed:

→ through close contact with a person with COVID-19 or a person presumed to have COVID-19 (without testing); and,
→ any persons who have traveled from countries with widespread sustained transmission should:

- Stay home (self-quarantine) for 14 days from the last day of potential exposure.
- It can take up to 14 days from the time someone is exposed to develop symptoms of COVID-19.
- Not be tested for COVID-19 because it doesn't change the need for a person to self-quarantine even if testing is negative.
- Help us preserve our medical supplies by not asking to be tested.

How do I get tested for COVID-19?
The Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) has developed clinical testing guidance for healthcare providers who will decide if you should be tested. Please contact your healthcare provider before going to their office. If you need immediate medical attention (for example, if you are very short of breath), call your Emergency Department or Urgent Care Center before going and tell them about your symptoms.

I heard it is hard to find a test. Is that true?
That was true during the start of this pandemic, but now there are more tests available at the NH Public Health Laboratories (PHL). The commercial laboratories (e.g., Quest, LabCorp, ARUP) are also now testing for COVID-19, but do not collect samples directly from patients. Samples submitted to commercial laboratories must be collected and coordinated by an ordering medical provider. Some hospital laboratories are also rapidly developing local capacity to test.

I heard there is a mobile testing unit for COVID-19 testing. How do I sign up?
The Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) is a self-contained unit of volunteers which is offering mobile testing to select groups throughout the state. Your provider can call the DPHS to help you get testing through this mechanism is you cannot be tested in their office.

I got tested and was told I could get the results from the NH Public Health Laboratories. How do I get my results?
If you were tested through your medical provider, urgent care or hospital, the provider who performed your test will provide you with your COVID-19 test result. NH Public Health Laboratories and DPHS are only able to provide COVID-19 test results to the medical provider who ordered the test.

PERSONAL PREVENTION

Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?
Not yet. Scientists are working on developing a vaccine to prevent COVID-19.
https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/coronaviruses-therapeutics-vaccines

How can I protect myself and others from COVID-19?
There are steps you can take to reduce your risk of getting sick from COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, and help prevent transmitting infections to others, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home from work or school if you have a fever or are not feeling well.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Get a flu shot—it is not too late to be protected from flu.

https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm

Should I buy masks or wear one in public?
Masks should only be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for healthcare workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (such as at home or in a healthcare facility). Buying unnecessary masks depletes the supply for healthcare professionals who need them to reduce the spread of disease and keep you safe.
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html

PLANNING

Should I plan for COVID-19?
Yes! Everyone has a role to play in getting ready and keeping yourself, your family and your community healthy! Check out these easy to follow recommendations from the CDC:

Resources for Preparedness in the Home
Resources for Preparedness in the Workplace
Resources for Community Preparedness

What should businesses be doing?
Businesses play a key role in stopping the spread of disease, including COVID-19, by encouraging employees to stay home when they are sick and preparing for staffing shortages in advance. Guidance and educational materials, such as the *COVID-19 Information for Businesses* can be found on the NH DHHS COVID-19 website.

Is there specific guidance for schools, colleges, and universities?
Schools can play an important role to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 into NH communities. Guidance and educational materials, such as the *COVID-19 Information for Schools* can be found on the NH DPHS COVID-Are 19 webpage.

Are there recommendations for Faith-Based and Community Organizations?
Yes. The CDC provides an excellent online guide at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html

Are there any recommendations for Homeless Shelters?
CDC has developed recommendations for homeless service providers, including overnight emergency shelters, day shelters, and meal service providers, about how to protect their staff, clients, and guests at CDC Interim Guidance for Homeless Shelters.

Are there any recommendations for jails and prisons?
Jails and prisons should have a plan in place to identify and house together people with suspected and diagnosed COVID-19 and those who are at high risk of serious illness if they become infected. This includes people with chronic illness, those with compromised immune systems and pregnant women.
https://thehill.com/opinion/criminal-justice/485236-4-ways-to-protect-our-jails-and-prisons-from-coronavirus

ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH MONITORING

What is isolation?
Isolation is intended for people who are sick. People who are sick with COVID-19 must stay separated from others in order to prevent further spread. Isolation in most cases is voluntary but can also be legally compelled by public health order. People in New Hampshire who are under isolation are also under active monitoring, which means a Public Health Professional reaches out to them daily to ensure they are staying isolated and their symptoms are not progressing.

What is quarantine?
Quarantine is intended for people who are not sick. People who are known to have been exposed to COVID-19 must stay separated from others in order to prevent spread in case they become sick. Quarantine in most cases is voluntary, but can also be legally compelled by public health order. People under self-quarantine for COVID-19 should monitor for symptoms of COVID-19, and notify their provider to consider evaluation and testing.

Can household members of people under quarantine leave their home?
Yes. Household members of persons under quarantine are not required to stay home. As long as the person under quarantine does not show any symptoms, and the household members are well, those living in the same house as someone on quarantine can leave the home. If the person being quarantined develops illness, household members must then also stay home on quarantine.

What is self-observation?
NH DHHS has created a Self-Observation Guide. This describes that self-observation is important for people who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. If you are told to self-observe, for the 14 days following exposure, do the following:

1. Practice strict respiratory etiquette and hygiene including covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap is not available.
2. Remain alert for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other signs of respiratory illness.
3. If you feel feverish or develop a cough or shortness of breath:
    - Take your temperature.
    - Limit contact with others.
    - Seek health advice, but before going to a doctor's office or emergency room call ahead and tell the provider or office about your potential exposure to COVID-19 and symptoms.

RISK-RELATED CONCERNS

I am afraid that people I see who may have come from China are going to give me COVID-19.
Fear and anxiety can lead to social stigma, for example, towards Chinese or other Asian Americans or people who were in self-quarantine. Stigma is discrimination against an identifiable group of people, a place, or a nation. Stigma is associated with a lack of knowledge about how COVID-19 spreads, a need to blame someone, fears about disease and death, and gossip that spreads rumors and myths. Stigma hurts everyone by creating more fear or anger towards ordinary people instead of the disease that is causing the problem. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

Am I at risk for novel coronavirus from a package or products shipping from China?
Coronaviruses are spread by respiratory droplets. There is no evidence that products or packaging that are shipped from Asia have ever transmitted COVID-19. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

Are there special cleaning procedures that should be followed in response to COVID-19?
Clean any visibly dirty surfaces and then follow with a disinfectant for the prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses. Public and private spaces should be routinely cleaned including all frequently touched surfaces such as desks, tables, chairs and doorknobs. No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time. Use cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. Have disposable wipes handy so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before each use. For more information on household cleaning, resources from the CDC, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html

How should I clean if someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 has been in an area or a room?
For detailed instructions on what and how to clean after a possible COVID-19 exposure, visit the CDC's recommendations at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

What should healthcare personnel (HCP) do if they had a potential exposure to COVID-19?
The CDC offers Interim U.S. Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure in a Healthcare Setting to Patients with Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). This interim guidance is intended to assist with assessment of risk, monitoring, and work restriction decisions for healthcare personnel with potential exposure to COVID-19.

RISKS TO PETS AND ANIMALS

What risks do animals or animal products imported from China pose?
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not have any evidence to suggest that animals or animal products imported from China pose a risk for spreading COVID-19 in the United States.

- CDC regulates animals and animal products that pose a threat to human health, USDA regulates animals and animal products that pose a threat to agriculture.
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) regulates importation of endangered species and wildlife that can harm the health and welfare of humans, the interests of agriculture, horticulture, or forestry, and the welfare and survival of wildlife resources.
- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) provides information on risks to pets and animals with additional guidance for veterinarians and veterinary clinics.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

Should I be concerned about pets or other animals and COVID-19?
While this virus likely came from an animal, it is now spreading from person to person. There is no reason to think that any animals including pets in the United States might be a source of infection with this new coronavirus. To date, the CDC has not received any reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19. At this time, there is no evidence that companion animals including pets can spread COVID-19. However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to wash your hands after being around animals. For more information on staying safe and healthy around animals including pets, livestock, and wildlife, visit CDC's Healthy Pets, Healthy People.
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

What if I'm sick with COVID-19 and have pets?
While you are sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with your pet, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. Whenever possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a facemask.
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#animals

TRAVEL-RELATED CONCERNS

Should I travel within the United States?
Cases of COVID-19 have been reported in all states, and some areas are experiencing community spread. Crowded travel settings, like airports, may increase your risk of exposure to COVID-19 if there are other travelers with COVID-19.

There are several things you should consider when deciding whether it is safe for you to travel:

- ***Will you or your travel companion(s) be in close contact with others during your trip?***
  Your risk of exposure to respiratory viruses like COVID-19 increases in crowded settings, particularly closed-in settings with little air circulation. This may include settings such as conferences, public events (like concerts and sporting events), religious gatherings, public spaces (like movie theatres and shopping malls), and public transportation (like buses, metro, trains).

- ***Are you or your travel companion(s) at higher risk of severe illness if you do get COVID-19?***
  People at higher risk for severe disease are older adults and people of any age with serious chronic medical conditions (such as heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes). The CDC recommends that travelers at higher risk for COVID-19 complications avoid all cruise travel and nonessential air travel.
- ***Do you have a plan for taking time off from work or school, in case you get exposed to, or are sick with, COVID-19?***
  If you have close contact with someone with COVID-19 during travel, you may be asked to stay home to self-monitor and avoid contact with others for up to 14 days after travel. If you become sick with COVID-19, you may be unable to go to work or school until you are considered noninfectious. You will be asked to avoid contact with others (including being in public places) during this period of infectiousness.
- ***Do you live with someone who is older or has a severe chronic health condition?***
  If you get sick with COVID-19 upon your return from travel, your household contacts may be at risk of infection. Household contacts who are older adults or have severe chronic medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- ***Is COVID-19 spreading where you live?***
  Consider the risk of passing COVID-19 to others during travel, particularly if you will be in close contact with people who are older adults or have severe chronic health condition. These people are at a higher risk for getting very sick. If your symptoms are mild or you do not have a fever, you may not realize you are infectious.

Depending on your unique circumstances, you may choose to delay or cancel your plans. If you do decide to travel, be sure to practice precautions to prevent getting and spreading COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases during travel. For the most up-to-date COVID-19 travel information, visit CDC COVID-19 Travel page.

What are the different recommendations for travelers returning from countries with a level 3, 2, or 1 travel advisory?

- **Level 3: Self-Quarantine Recommendations**
  Travelers from countries with a level 3 travel advisory are advised to self-quarantine by staying home and monitoring their health for 14 days following travel *(Self-Quarantine Guidance).*
- **Level 2: Self-Observation Recommendations**
  Travelers from countries with a level 2 travel advisory are advised to monitor their health and limit interactions with others for 14 days after returning to the United States *(Self-Observation Guidance).*
- **Level 1: No movement restrictions**
  Take normal precautions to keep yourself healthy.

I am traveling to a country with a travel notice. Should I cancel?

Travel notices are based on assessment of the potential health risks involved with traveling to a certain area. A list of destinations with travel notices is available on the CDC website.

- **Warning Level 3: Avoid Nonessential Travel**
  CDC recommends travelers avoid all nonessential travel to destinations with Level 3 travel notices because of the risk of getting COVID-19.
- **Alert Level 2: Practice Enhanced Precautions**
  Because COVID-19 can be more serious in older adults and those with chronic medical conditions, people in these groups should talk to a healthcare provider and consider postponing travel to destinations with Level 2 travel notices.
- **Watch Level 1: Practice Usual Precautions**
  CDC does not recommend canceling or postponing travel to destinations with Level 1 travel notices because the risk of COVID-19 is thought to be low.

If you must travel, take the following routine precautions:

- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean your hands often by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%–95% alcohol. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.
    - It is especially important to clean hands after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/faqs.html

If you travel to a location with any level of travel advisory for COVID-19, when you return, you should remain alert for fever or respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath). An informational handout on self-observation is available for travelers.

What if I recently traveled to an area affected by COVID-19 and am sick?
The CDC has additional specific online guidance for travelers available at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html

What about families of people who have been in China?
There is no public health reason to exclude family members of people with no symptoms who were in China or a country with active community spread of disease in the previous 14 days. Family members who did not travel may go to school or work if the person who traveled has no symptoms.

Is it safe to go on a cruise?
No. The CDC recommends all persons defer any travel on cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide because of the increased risk of COVID-19 transmission onboard ships. Deferring travel is especially important for older adults and all people with serious chronic medical conditions (such as heart disease, diabetes or lung disease), because of their increased risk for severe disease. Cruises put large numbers of people, often from countries around the world, in frequent and close contact with each other. The proximity of passengers and crew on small ships and boats traveling on rivers may result in an even higher number of COVID-19 infections.
https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/coronavirus-cruise-ship?deliveryName=USCDC_511-DM22941

Healthcare providers should:

- Advise patients to defer all cruise ship travel, including river cruises, worldwide.
- Explain that their return travel to the United States may be impacted, and formal quarantine procedures may be implemented if confirmed cases are identified on board.
- Explain that appropriate medical care or medical evacuation may not be available internationally.
- Explain that some countries may refuse docking or disembarkation if there are known or suspected cases on board.
- For patients who still intend to cruise, advise them to
    - Stay in their cabin and notify the onboard medical center immediately if they get sick with fever, new or worsening cough, or trouble breathing during their cruise.
    - Stay home for 14 days after returning from travel, practice social distancing, and monitor their health both during travel and after they return. Social distancing means staying out of crowded places, avoiding group gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others, when possible.

What is the risk of getting COVID-19 on an airplane?
Because of how air circulates and is filtered on airplanes, most viruses and other germs do not spread easily on airplanes. Although the risk of infection on an airplane is low, travelers should try to avoid contact with sick passengers and wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer that contain 60%–95% alcohol. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/faqs.html

Are layovers included in CDC's recommendation to avoid nonessential travel?
Yes. Layovers at airports in destinations with level 3 travel notices are included in CDC's recommendation to avoid nonessential travel. If a layover is unavoidable, CDC recommends that travelers not leave the airport. Travelers with layovers may still be subject to screening and monitoring when entering the United States. For more information, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/faqs.html

What precautions should be taken by people who travel internationally?
People should avoid all travel to any locations for which the CDC has issued a Level 3 travel notice. Given the rapidly evolving outbreak and frequently changing travel advisories, people should also consider postponing any nonessential travel to countries with a Level 2 travel advisory. See CDC travel notice website https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices

People who have returned from countries with a Level 3 travel advisory are advised to self-quarantine by staying home and monitoring their health for 14 days after returning to the United States (See self-quarantine guidance). Travelers from countries with a Level 2 level travel advisory are advised to monitor their health and limit interactions with others for 14 days after returning to the United States (See self-observation guidance).

If symptoms develop after travel to a country with a COVID-19 related travel advisory, the individual should:

- Take their temperature with a thermometer.
- Stay home and avoid close contact with other people.
- Seek health advice by phone from either a healthcare provider or the NH DPHS at 603-271-4496 (after hours 603-271-5300).
- Before going to a doctor's office or emergency room, the individual should call ahead and tell the provider or office about recent travel and symptoms.
- Practice strict respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene including covering the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Symptomatic individuals should wear a surgical mask when traveling outside of the home (e.g., to a doctor's office) to protect others.

QUESTIONS FROM MEDICAL PROVIDERS

How should I prioritize the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing supplies?
Any significant decline in the healthcare workforce will have a negative impact on New Hampshire residents' access to treatment for COVID-treatment and other health needs. Due to the nationwide shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other testing supplies, healthcare providers in New Hampshire must preserve the State's existing inventory of these materials and use them for:

- **Patients who will develop severe COVID-19 illness**
- **Exposed healthcare providers**
- **Exposed first responders**

https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/media/pr/2020/03202020-new-covid-19-testing-guidelines.htm

I am a medical provider and I want to get my patient tested for COVID-19. What do I need to know?
If you are called by a symptomatic person, please evaluate this person and determine if testing is indicated.

- ✓ *Please do not direct your patients to call NH DPHS for clinical evaluation.*
- ✓ *Please do not send non-urgent patients to an emergency room for evaluation or sample collection.*

Commercial laboratories (e.g., Quest, LabCorp) are now testing for COVID-19, but do not collect samples directly from patients. Samples submitted to commercial laboratories must be collected and coordinated by the ordering provider. Some hospital laboratories are also developing local capacity to test. DPHS has developed clinical testing guidance for

providers who are seeing symptomatic patients as testing capacity is increasing at our NH Public Health Laboratories (PHL). The DPHS Health Alert Network Message #7 includes Updated NH DPHS Recommendations for Testing for COVID-19 in Patients Presenting with Fever or Respiratory Illness With or Without Identified Risk Factors.

Testing at the New Hampshire Public Health Laboratories (PHL) has a minimum turnaround time of 72 hours from receipt of clinical specimens. Specimens testing positive by the NH PHL will be reported as confirmed.

To submit specimens to the NH PHL for COVID-19 testing:

1. Report the person under investigation (PUI) to the Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496.
2. Complete a NH PHL Requisition.
3. To send specimens to the NH PHL, collect NP swab and put into *viral transport media (VTM).*

CDC Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

How do I get test results from specimens submitted for testing by the NH Public Health Laboratories?
The NH PHL will not release any test results over the phone. All results will be faxed to the facility indicated in the Submitter Information section of the NH PHL Requisition as soon as they are finalized. Individuals should contact the healthcare provider who ordered the test to receive their results.

How are COVID-19 tests paid for?
NH has issued an order that requires health insurers to cover services associated with testing for COVID-19. Health insurance companies must provide coverage, prior to application of any deductible and without cost sharing, for the initial healthcare provider visit and test for their members who meet the CDC criteria for testing, as determined by the insured's healthcare provider. For more information visit https://www.nh.gov/insurance/consumers/health-insurance-coronavirus-faq.htm

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

Manchester Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Press Release: Published March 13, 2020
There is an ongoing investigation to identify people with close contact before this individual self-isolated. ***Any person who has been identified as a close contact will be notified directly by DHHS***. If you are not contacted by DHHS, you have not been identified as a close contact, please see information below about self-observation.

DHHS has determined that the person was at the Manchester branch of the NH Division of Motor Vehicles, at 377 South Willow Street in Manchester on the following days:

Monday	March 2, 2020	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Tuesday	March 3, 2020	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	March 4, 2020	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Thursday	March 5, 2020	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Tuesday	March 10, 2020	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Any individuals who entered the Manchester DMV during those days and times may have been potentially been exposed to the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 and should monitor their health for fever or respiratory illness and should use the self-observation guidance.

Any persons who were in the Manchester DMV on the days indicated above and have developed symptoms should stay home, limit their contact with others, and immediately contact their healthcare provider for evaluation. If you need

immediate medical attention (for example, if you are very short of breath), call your Emergency Department or Urgent Care Center, and before going and tell them about your symptoms and possible exposure.

NH DHHS, DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES (DPHS) RESPONSE

We care deeply about the health and wellbeing of the people of NH. We are committed to sharing accurate information with the public to ensure the optimal health and wellbeing of all NH residents while also ensuring we uphold the highest privacy standards for individual patients. As an organization we rely on the best available science and evidence-based practices. In rapidly evolving situations such as this we will provide updated information as it becomes available.

NH DPHS has been working closely with the CDC since the first case of COVID-19 was detected in the United States. We are working with our healthcare and public health partners to ensure readiness to identify and respond to potential cases of COVID-19.

To date, NH DHHS key activities have included:

- Activation of our Incident Management Team to coordinate our public health response with emergency services, homeland security officials, and other public health partners.
- Identifying and investigating people with suspect COVID-19 and their close contacts.
- Implementing illness monitoring and quarantine for travelers returning from mainland China.
- Preparing and shipping specimens to CDC for testing while simultaneously working with CDC to implement the testing locally here in the NH Public Health Laboratories.
- Providing technical guidance and information to healthcare and public health partners through health alerts, written guidance, and webinars.
- Planning for future potential for community transmission in the United States including addressing needs for medical surge, community mitigation, and providing housing, transportation, and wrap-around services (e.g., food) for people under isolation or quarantine due to illness or exposure.
- Maintaining situational awareness for COVID-19 across the globe and providing updates to stakeholders.
- Maintaining daily communications with federal partners including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, and other national organizations.
- Maintaining regular communications with other state agencies, local health departments, and other partners.
- Informing the public on respiratory disease prevention measures through media interviews and social media posts.

In outbreaks such as this, public health recommendations may change. We encourage you to check these key resources frequently for updates:

- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- NH Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS)

KEY CONTACTS

Inquiry/Topic	Contact	Phone/Email
▪ General Information ▪ www.nh.gov/covid19	2-1-1 New Hampshire	1-866-444-4211 TTY: 603-634-3388
▪ Clinical Questions	Bureau of Infectious Disease Control	603-271-4496
▪ Healthcare Surge ▪ Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Supply Issues	DHHS Emergency Services Unit	esu@dhhs.nh.gov
▪ Media Inquiries ▪ Requests for Media Support	State of NH Joint Information Center	603-223-6169 JIC@dos.nh.gov
▪ Laboratory Courier Service	NH Public Health Laboratories	603-271-0305
▪ Sampling Supplies	NH Public Health Laboratories	603-271-4605 PHLClinicalKitOrders@dhhs.nh.gov