



Veterinary Health Advisory Network (VHAN)

January 28, 2020

Update on Outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

As veterinarians, we play an important role in public health and need to be informed about the emergence of novel diseases. Accordingly, we are providing this update with information on the Novel Coronavirus.

Summary

As of noon on January 27, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed five human cases of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in the United States. On January 26, the CDC announced that they had confirmed cases in Maricopa County, Arizona; Los Angeles County, California; and Orange County, California. Previously, the first case was discovered in Everett, Washington and the second case was discovered in Chicago, Illinois. All cases have evidence of travel history to Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.

Cases of 2019-nCoV were first detected during an outbreak of pneumonia in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and has since then spread internationally. The virus has been suspected to originate from a large seafood and live animal market, which has been closed since early January. Investigations are ongoing with these cases, but person-to-person spread of 2019-nCoV is occurring.

Background

Some coronaviruses are endemic to humans and cause mild respiratory infections (i.e., the common cold). Others commonly circulate among animals, including camels, dogs, cats, and bats. On occasion, certain animal related coronaviruses have evolved and spilled over into human populations, leading to outbreaks such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Person-to-person transmission with these previous coronaviruses is suspected to occur through respiratory droplets with close contacts. Symptoms of coronavirus infection include fever, cough, and dyspnea. Severe illnesses and deaths have been reported in some cases.

Recommendations for veterinarians and the general public

The following general precautions and personal hygiene are being encouraged:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

Currently, CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Wuhan, China. For the most up-to-date travel notices, visit <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

If you or anyone you know has been exhibiting respiratory symptoms with travel history to Wuhan, China, please contact your physician and Harris County Public Health at 713-439-6000, Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (713-755-5050 afterhours).

For more information

Public health entities at the local, state, and national levels have been tracking this constant developing situation. Please refer to the following sites for more information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>)
- Harris County Public Health (<http://publichealth.harriscountytexas.gov/Resources/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>)

For any further questions on this developing situation, please contact Harris County Veterinary Public Health at 832-927-1143 or email sarah.smith@phs.hctx.net.

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