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New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department

CORONAVIRUS IN NEW MEXICO

WHAT WE KNOW

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is monitoring the global outbreak of COVID-19 and implementing measures to minimize the spread of this virus should it be introduced in New Mexico. The Children, Youth & Families Department is working daily with NMDOH to monitor potential risks to our families and staff.

Imported cases of COVID-19 in travelers have been detected in the U.S. Person-to-person spread of COVID-19 also has been seen among close contacts of returned travelers, but at this time, this virus has not been detected in New Mexico and is currently not spreading in the community in New Mexico.

The complete clinical picture of COVID-19 is not fully understood. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild to severe, including illness resulting in death. There are ongoing investigations to learn more. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.

The potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 is high, both globally and to the United States. But individual risk is dependent on exposure. For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Under current circumstances, certain people will have an increased risk of infection, for example healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 and other close contacts of persons with COVID-19. NMDOH is working with healthcare providers in the state to identify patients at risk of COVID-19, to provide testing, and to manage infection control procedures to minimize the potential spread of the virus from those who are sick.

Everyone has a role to play in reducing the spread of respiratory viruses and it is not rocket science, but it works:
o Stay home when you are sick and limit close contact with other people except for the medical care that you need.
o Cover your cough and sneezes to reduce the spread of infectious droplets and wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% alcohol
o Clean "high touch" surfaces daily, including counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables with regular household cleaners
o Avoid sharing personal household items.
o If you are not sick, still wash your hands frequently when you are in places where there may be other sick people and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

We do not recommend the use of facemasks to prevent getting infected with a respiratory virus, unless your healthcare provider has specifically recommended this for you. A facemask is most effective in limiting the spread of infectious droplets when worn by persons with respiratory symptoms.

WHAT'S COMING

There are currently no vaccines or treatments for COVID-19 and diagnostic testing is very limited. Efforts now to prevent the spread of all respiratory viruses will slow the introduction of COVID-19 and allowing time for more progress on vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics.

More cases are likely to be identified in the U.S. in the coming days. It's also likely that person-to-person spread will continue to occur, including in the United States. NMDOH has reviewed pandemic preparedness plans and adapted them for COVID-19. We are looking ahead and taking steps now to prepare for the monitoring and care of patients with COVID-19 should we have widespread disease in New Mexico

Testing kits are now available at the New Mexico State Laboratory in Albuquerque. Tests are only done with prior approval with contact information available at https://cv.nmhealth.org.

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Please visit the NMDOH website for FAQs and to stay up to date about COVID-19 in New Mexico
https://cv.nmhealth.org/   03/02/20