



# Novel Coronavirus 2019 – Information for parents of children in school or childcare – 30 January 2020

---

*An outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in Hubei Province, China in late December 2019*

## Exclusion from School or Childcare

- If you have been informed that your child is a close contact of a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), even if they don't have symptoms, they must be isolated at home for 14 days following their exposure to the confirmed case, other than for the purpose of seeking individual medical care. They cannot attend school or childcare until ACT Health informs you that it is safe for your child to do so.
- If your child has recently travelled to Hubei Province in China, they must be isolated at home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province, other than for seeking individual medical care.
- If your child has recently travelled to mainland China, they can attend school or childcare and do not need to be isolated at home. If your child has recently travelled to mainland China and has developed symptoms, contact your General Practitioner (GP) for an assessment. Your GP will liaise with ACT Health and determine whether your child should be self-isolated and be excluded from school or childcare.

## What is Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a group of viruses that can affect humans and animals. In humans, coronaviruses can cause mild illness, such as the common cold and gastrointestinal infections, as well as more severe illness, such as that caused by SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome).

There is an outbreak of a new strain of coronavirus called 'novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV'. This has so far mostly only affected people who live in/have visited Hubei Province, China, or who have had close contact with sick people with the novel coronavirus infection.

The length of time that a person is infectious, that is, can spread the infection to others, is not yet confirmed. There is emerging information that some people may be infectious for a short period before they develop symptoms or have very minimal symptoms. However, this information is very limited and preliminary. While this is believed to be uncommon, it does mean that returned travellers from Hubei Province may be able to transmit the infection before they develop obvious symptoms.



The Australian Government is closely monitoring the situation and this advice will be updated as necessary.

## **For parents of children who are excluded from school or childcare**

### What are the symptoms of novel coronavirus?

Symptoms include, but are not limited to, fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath.

### What if my child is unwell with these symptoms?

#### *If your child is a close contact of a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus*

You need to contact Communicable Disease Control (CDC), ACT Health on (02) 5124 9213 during business hours or by paging (02) 9962 4155 after hours. CDC will assess and advise on what to do next.

If you can't contact CDC, see a doctor. Phone the doctor before attending and tell them that you are a contact of a confirmed case of novel coronavirus.

#### *If your child has travelled to Hubei Province in China in the 14 days before the start of the symptoms*

Contact your GP for an assessment. When you call your GP's practice, tell the staff that your child has been in Hubei Province, so that they can be prepared for your visit.

### How can we all help prevent the spread of the virus?

Practising good hand and general hygiene is the best defence against the spread of the virus.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water before and after eating as well as after using the toilet,
- avoid close contact with others, and
- cough and sneeze into your elbow or directly into a tissue and throw the tissue in a bin.

### Where can I get more information?

<https://www.health.act.gov.au/public-health-alert/information-about-novel-coronavirus>

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus>



## Accessibility

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like an alternative format, please phone 13 22 81.



If English is not your first language and you need the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.

For further accessibility information, visit: [www.health.act.gov.au/accessibility](http://www.health.act.gov.au/accessibility)

[www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au) | Phone: 132281

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra, 29 January 2020