# Update on Novel Coronavirus Originating in Wuhan, China

## Update to York Region hospitals as of January 24, 2020

The novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) situation continues to evolve with case counts increasing daily, primarily in Wuhan, China. Additional cases are being reported in other parts of China, elsewhere in Asia and now in the USA, and seem to be related to the original outbreak. Human to human transmission has been confirmed, though the extent of transmission is still to be determined.

There have been no confirmed cases in Canada and there are no known cases involving Canadians overseas. **At this time, the risk to York Region residents is low.** The Public Health Agency of Canada, Ontario's Ministry of Health, public health units and health system and other partners are working closely to monitor, plan and respond to this evolving situation.

**As of January 22, 2020, Ontario's Ministry of Health has made this novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV required to be reported to local public health as a "disease caused by novel coronaviruses, including SARS and MERS".** With this change in the Regulations, you must contact York Region Public Health directly to report, as you would to report other diseases of public health significance.

### Contact York Region Public Health immediately if you suspect a case of 2019-nCoV

**For details on what to look for and case definitions for confirmed, probable, presumptive positive, and persons under investigation for 2019-nCoV (as of January 23, 2020), please see the following document: Case Definition for Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**.

**Call 1-877-464-9675 ext. 73588** Monday to Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or **905-953-6478** after hours (before 8:30 a.m. and after 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday and 24 hours per day on weekends/holidays).

As per the Ministry of Health's communication of January 23, 2020 to hospital partners, please use the following recommendations for acute care settings:

Use Routine Practices and Additional Precautions (contact, droplet, airborne) by health care workers at risk of exposure to a confirmed case, presumptive confirmed case, probable case or person under investigation (or PUI) and/or the patient's environment. These precautions include:

- hand hygiene
- use of airborne infection isolation rooms when possible
- masking the patient with a surgical mask when outside of an airborne infection isolation room
- use of gloves, gowns, fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirators and eye protection by health care workers when entering the same room as the patient or when transporting or caring for the patient (including when collecting specimens or performing any aerosolizing procedures)

For more information on Routine Practices and Additional Precautions, health care workers should refer to PIDAC's *Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings* (https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/about/our-organization/external-advisory-committees/pidac-ipc) and *Annex B: Prevention of Transmission of Acute Respiratory Infection in all Health Care Settings* (https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/about/our-organization/external-advisory-committees/pidac-ipc)

**Note**: The use of airborne precautions is a higher level of precaution recommended by the ministry than is being recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada or the World Health Organization (WHO), or that is normally recommended for coronaviruses. The ministry is recommending at this time that health care workers apply airborne precautions based on the application of the precautionary principle to this novel coronavirus for which little information about transmission and clinical severity is currently available.

## Additional Helpful Resources

**For general information on novel coronavirus:**

York Region Public Health
**york.ca/coronavirus**

Public Health Ontario – Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus

**For testing information:**

PHO Laboratory Wuhan Novel Coronavirus Test Information Sheet
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/laboratory-services/test-information-index/wuhan-novel-coronavirus

**For infection prevention and control information:**

World Health Organization - Infection prevention and control during health care when novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection is suspected
https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/330375/WHO-2019-nCoV-IPC-v2020.1-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

PIDAC - Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in All Health Care Settings
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/about/our-organization/external-advisory-committees/pidac-ipc

PHO - Annex B: Prevention of Transmission of Acute Respiratory Infection in all Health Care Settings
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/about/our-organization/external-advisory-committees/pidac-ipc

**For home isolation guidance for persons under investigation for 2019-nCoV, use the following guidance in the interim:**

World Health Organization – Infection prevention and control during health care when novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection is suspected (interim guidance)
https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Preventing 2019-nCoV from spreading
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/guidance-prevent-spread.html

## Contact York Region Public Health

If you have any questions about 2019-nCoV, contact York Region Public Health's Control of Infectious Diseases program at **1-877-464-9675 ext. 73588**, Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or **905-953-6478** after hours (before 8:30 a.m. and after 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday and 24 hours per day on weekends/holidays).

Connect to ***york.ca/healthprofessionals*** for insights on current public health topics, up-to-date information and resources from York Region Public Health's programs and services. Visit the **Announcements and Resources** page for our latest communications and to subscribe to our quarterly e-newsletter *Public Health Matters*, which covers topics relevant to today's health care professionals

# Case Definition for Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

**Person under Investigation for 2019-nCoV**

A person with fever and acute respiratory illness, or pneumonia, for whom a laboratory test for 2019-nCoV has been requested,

**AND** any of the following:

- Travel to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before onset of illness

  OR
- Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of 2019-nCoV

  OR
- Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to Wuhan, China within 14 days prior to their illness onset

**Probable Case for 2019-nCoV**

A person:

- with fever (over 38 degrees Celsius) AND new onset of (or exacerbation of chronic) cough or breathing difficulty AND evidence of severe illness progression *e.g.* acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) or severe influenza-like illness (may include complications such as encephalitis, myocarditis or other severe and life-threatening complications)

**AND** any of the following:

- Travel to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before onset of illness

OR

- Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of 2019-nCoV

OR

- Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to Wuhan, China within 14 days prior to their illness onset

**AND**

- in whom laboratory diagnosis of 2019-nCoV is not available or negative (if specimen quality or timing is suspect)

**Presumptive Positive Case for 2019-nCoV**

A person in whom the laboratory screening test for 2019-nCoV was positive from the Public Health Ontario Laboratory but not confirmed by the National Microbiological Laboratory.

**Confirmed Case for 2019-nCoV**

A person with laboratory confirmation of infection with 2019-nCoV which consists of positive real-time PCR on at least two specific genomic targets or a single positive target with sequencing AND confirmed by NML by nucleic acid testing.

**Case Definition Footnotes**

1. The incubation period of 2019-nCoV is unknown. SARS-CoV demonstrated a prolonged incubation period (median 4-5 days; range 2-10 days) compared to other human coronavirus infections (average 2 days; typical range 12 hours to 5 days). The incubation period for MERS-CoV is approximately 5 days (range 2-14 days). Allowing for variability and recall error and to establish consistency with the World Health Organization's 2019-nCoV case definition, exposure history based on the prior 14 days is recommended at this time.
2. A close contact is defined as a person who provided care for the patient, including healthcare workers, family members or other caregivers, or who had other similar close physical contact OR who lived with or otherwise had close prolonged contact with a probable or confirmed case while the case was ill.
3. Other exposure scenarios not specifically mentioned here may arise and may be considered at jurisdictional discretion (*e.g.* history of being a patient in the same ward or facility during a nosocomial outbreak of 2019-nCoV).
4. There is limited evidence on the likelihood of 2019-nCoV presenting as a co-infection with other pathogens. At this time, the identification of one causative agent should not exclude 2019-nCoV where the index of suspicion may be high.
5. Laboratory confirmation may not be available due to no possibility of acquiring samples for laboratory testing of 2019-nCoV.
6. Laboratory tests are evolving for this emerging pathogen, and laboratory testing recommendations will change accordingly as new assays are developed and validated.