



# Hebron Public Schools



High Expectations, Bright Futures

*Office of the Superintendent*

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*Superintendent of Schools*

*Donald Briere, Ph.D.*  
*Director of Educational Services*

January 31, 2020

To Hebron Families:

As you may be aware, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the new coronavirus outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International concern yesterday. We remain vigilant on the matter and wish to share with you a recent publication from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Please review the one page attachment.

We would also like to communicate to families some standard preventative measures we may all take to reduce the likelihood of contracting and/or spreading illness. It is typical this time of year to see a rise in the number of students with influenza, cold viruses, and/or norovirus symptoms (also known as the “stomach bug”). As such, both of our schools are on a regular schedule to clean, disinfect, and sanitize our buildings. We continue to work diligently to clean and disinfect surfaces each day. This involves daily sanitizing of surfaces that are touched often (e.g., desks, countertops, doorknobs, keyboards, phones, sinks, and bathroom surfaces). We have also posted ‘Cover your Cough’ posters around each of our buildings to encourage all students and staff to use preventative measures in stopping the spread of germs.

It is important to note that at this time there is not a major outbreak of the flu; however, we would still like to inform families of effective ways to protect themselves and their children against the flu. Below is a brief checklist of ways to help protect yourself and your children from the flu. Below you will find a list of actions to consider if someone in your home develops flu symptoms.

## **Here are some ways to protect your family from the flu:**

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don’t send them to school.
  - ✓ Teach your children to wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
  - ✓ Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
  - ✓ Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.
  - ✓ People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are fever free for a minimum of 24 hours and illness symptoms are dramatically improved.

## **If someone in your home develops flu symptoms (fever, cough, muscle aches):**

- ✓ Encourage plenty of fluids to drink.
- ✓ Keep the ill person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
- ✓ Seek medical advice if necessary.

For additional information, you may call your health provider or visit the Chatham Health District website at <http://chathamhealth.org/> or by calling 860-365-0884.

**Additional Resources:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

World Health Organization

[https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/30-01-2020-statement-on-the-second-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-\(2005\)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/30-01-2020-statement-on-the-second-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-(2005)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov))

If you have questions, please contact your school nurse or healthcare provider. The number for Gilead Hill School is 860-228-4933. The number for Hebron Elementary School is 860-228-8420.

Sincerely,



Donald E. Briere, PhD.

Director of Educational Services

Cc: Thomas J. Baird, Superintendent of Schools

Katie Uriano, Principal, Gilead Hill School

Michael Larkin, Principal, Hebron Elementary School

# Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) and You



## What is 2019 novel coronavirus?

The 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person-to-person. This virus was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get 2019-nCoV?

The 2019-nCoV does seem to be able to spread from person-to-person although it's not clear how easily this happens. Limited person-to-person spread among close contacts has been detected with this virus in the United States. At this time, this virus is not spreading in communities in the U.S., so the likelihood of someone in the U.S. getting sick with this virus is very low. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

## Have there been cases of 2019-nCoV in the U.S.?

Yes. The first infection with 2019-nCoV in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of infection with 2019-nCoV in the United States is available on CDC's webpage: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html)

## How does 2019-nCoV spread?

This virus probably originally emerged from an animal source but now seems to be spreading from person-to-person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. At this time, it's unclear how easily or sustainably this virus is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html).

## What are the symptoms of 2019-nCoV?

Patients with 2019-nCoV have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

## How can I help protect myself?

This virus is not spreading in the United States right now, but the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should:

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should get medical care. Call the office of your health care provider before you go and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against 2019-nCoV. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for 2019-nCoV. People with 2019-nCoV can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

