



Coronavirus Update – Jan. 24, 2020

The current situation:

As you are aware, a newly identified Coronavirus has infected several hundred individuals predominantly in Wuhan, China, but patients have been identified in other Asian countries and Seattle, Washington. Because the disease has now been diagnosed in the United States, GMR has established a 2019-nCoV National Guidance Team to provide support in preparation and response to these potential patients.

The Team consists of GMR air & ground clinical practices staff, safety leadership, operations, education, equipment & supply, nurse navigation, physician medical directors and communications. We have also established external communications with our colleagues at CDC and Homeland Security.

The purpose of this communication is to provide immediate information regarding the outbreak and to describe our approach to keep you informed, prepared and safe. Here are the key points for today:

- Because 2019-nCoV is a newly identified Coronavirus, experts continue to learn about its activity. At present, it appears to be like the MERS virus in presentation, transmission and morbidity and mortality. Importantly, the WHO & CDC do not yet see this as a substantial public health threat but continue to monitor and institute aggressive prevention efforts.
- There is currently no vaccine or specific treatment available. Care is supportive.
- The virus is now believed to be transmitted from person-to-person via respiratory droplets in close contact.
- Symptoms of infection are predominantly respiratory – similar to patients with pneumonia or influenza. Fever is an important screening point in evaluation.
- Identification of potential patients (deemed Persons Under Investigation or PUI as described during the Ebola outbreak) involves three critical elements:
 - Presence of FEVER

- AND – Symptoms of respiratory illness
- AND – Travel within the past 14 days to an area known to be impacted – currently Wuhan, China, Japan and Thailand
- If a diagnosis is suspected based on above, implement appropriate precautions – Standard/ Contact / Airborne & Eye Protection
- Place a surgical mask on the patient
- Notify the appropriate receiving facility prior to arrival
- Equipment and vehicle decontamination should follow current recommendations while continuing appropriate PPE
- As with any potentially transmittable infectious disease, we all have the knowledge, skills and tools to implement appropriate precautions to prevent transmission. There are no new or different recommendations for this virus

What you should do right now:

- Refresh your knowledge on Standard / Contact / Airborne and Eye Protection equipment and approaches
- Make sure you have been fit-tested and utilize company supplied N-95/P-100 respirators in accordance with organizational and regulatory guidelines [1]
- Bookmark the [CDC 2019 novel Coronavirus website](#)
- Ramp up awareness of asking the 14-day Travel History question in patients presenting with FEVER and respiratory symptoms
- Continue to do things the way we always do – be thoughtful, vigilant and informed

[1] Users must not have been fit-tested in the presence of facial hair that comes between the respirator seal and the skin. When donning the N-95/P-100 respirator there can be no facial hair or stubble between the respirator seal and the skin. ([View approved facial hair illustrations.](#))
