



TOWN OF LYME DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

UPDATE: NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

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ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people and then spread between people such as with [MERS-CoV](#), [SARS-CoV](#), and now with this new virus (named SARS-CoV-2).

The SARS-CoV-2 virus is a betacoronavirus, like MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV. All three of these viruses have their origins in bats. The sequences from U.S. patients are similar to the one that China initially posted, suggesting a likely single, recent emergence of this virus from an animal reservoir.

Early on, many of the patients in the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China had some link to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. Later, a growing number of patients reportedly did not have exposure to animal markets, indicating person-to-person spread. Person-to-person spread has been reported outside China, including in the [United States](#) and [other locations](#). Chinese officials report that sustained person-to-person spread in the community is occurring in China. In addition, [other destinations have apparent community spread](#), meaning some people have been infected who are not sure how or where they became infected. Learn what is known about the [spread of newly emerged coronaviruses](#).

WHAT MAY HAPPEN IN THE UNITED STATES

More cases are likely to be identified in the coming days, including more cases in the United States. It's also likely that person-to-person spread will continue to occur, including in the United States. Widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the United States would translate into large numbers of people needing medical care at the same time. Schools, childcare centers, workplaces, and other places for mass gatherings may experience more absenteeism. Public health and healthcare systems may become overloaded, with elevated rates of hospitalizations and deaths. Other critical infrastructure, such as law enforcement, emergency medical services, and transportation industry may also be affected. Health care providers and hospitals may be overwhelmed. At this time, there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19 and no medications approved to treat it. [Nonpharmaceutical interventions](#) would be the most important response strategy.

INFORMATION FROM THE CDC

CDC believes at this time that symptoms of the coronavirus may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. No vaccine or specific treatment for the infection is available, however care is supportive. When person-to-person spread has occurred with MERS and SARS, it is thought to have happened via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, like how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. Spread of SARS and MERS between people has generally occurred between close contacts.

Symptoms of the coronavirus may include:

- Runny nose
- Headache
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- A general feeling of being unwell

The CDC recommends that individuals avoid all nonessential travel to Wuhan, China, but has provided specific for those who are still planning a trip to Wuhan and for individuals who have recently returned from that city and may be experiencing the above symptoms. While there is currently no vaccine for this coronavirus, everyday preventative actions can help stop the spread of this and other respiratory viruses, including:

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

Individuals who are experiencing symptoms and may have traveled to areas of concern or have been in contact with somebody who has traveled to these areas should call ahead to their healthcare provider before presenting for treatment.

CORONAVIRUS SCAMS TO AVOID

- **Don't fall victim to clickbait.** If you receive an email or text claiming to have news about coronavirus, do not open it, and get accurate information about any updates in Connecticut on DPH's website at www.ct.gov/dph or the [Centers for Disease Control's \(CDC\) website](https://www.cdc.gov)

- **Watch for imposter emails.** Look out for emails claiming to be the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO). If you're not already subscribed to receive emails from them, you won't get one out of nowhere.
- **Ignore online offers for vaccinations or miracle treatments.** If you see ads touting prevention, treatment, or cure claims for the coronavirus, ignore it. You won't hear about medical breakthroughs for the first time through an ad or sales pitch.
- **Do your homework when considering making donations.** Don't donate to any organization claiming to help those sick from the coronavirus unless you have done your research. Any charity soliciting in the State of Connecticut must be registered with DCP. You can verify their registration at www.elicense.ct.gov.
- **Watch out for scam "investment opportunities".** The [U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission \(SEC\) has warned people](#) about online promotions, including on social media, claiming that the products or services of publicly-traded "companies" can prevent, detect, or cure coronavirus.

USEFUL LINKS

- Ledgelight Health District (Lyme's health department):
<https://llhd.org/>
- Connecticut Department of Public Health News:
<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Press-Room>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>
- World Health Organization
<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

As additional information and suggested or recommended actions are received, updates will be provided.

Sincerely,



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