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Wuhan novel coronavirus (WN-CoV): travel to Wuhan, China

Avoid all but essential travel to Wuhan, Hubei province, China and advice for travellers

On the 31st December 2019, the World Health Organization was informed of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan in Hubei province, China [1]. A [novel \(new\) coronavirus](#) was identified as the cause [2]. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses with some causing mild illness, such as the common cold, and others more severe disease such as Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome SARS [3].

As of 22 January 2020, a total of 440 confirmed cases of this novel coronavirus have been reported from 13 provinces of mainland China. Most cases are reported in Hubei province (375 cases) [4]. Other provinces reporting cases include Beijing, Chongqing City, Guangdong, Henan, Hunan, Jiangxi, Shandong, Shanghai, Sichuan, Tianjin, Zhejiang, Yunnan. Most of the reported cases are in Wuhan, in Hubei province, or have travelled from Wuhan. To date, 15 health care workers in China are reported to have been infected [3]. Nine deaths all in Hubei province have been reported [4].

In addition, as of 22 January 2020, cases have been diagnosed in travellers from Wuhan in Thailand (2 cases), Japan (1 case), the Republic of Korea (1 case), Taiwan (1 case) and United States (1 case) [3].

This is an evolving situation. [Updates are available from Public Health England.](#)

Advice for travellers

Risk to the UK population travelling to Wuhan, China, is considered to be moderate.

UK travellers are recommended to avoid all but essential travel to Wuhan, Hubei province, China.

If travel to Wuhan is essential, you should take precautions in order to minimise the risk of transmission including:

- Wash hands regularly with soap and water or a disinfectant, especially after coughing and sneezing, before handling and consuming food.
- Use disposable tissues when coughing or sneezing and dispose of used tissues carefully and promptly.
- Avoid close contact with people who appear unwell and avoid sharing personal items.
- Avoid visiting live bird and animal markets, backyard or commercial poultry farms and do not touch wild or domestic birds (alive or dead).
- Avoid any contact with animals, birds or surfaces that may be contaminated with animal or bird droppings.
- Do not eat or handle undercooked or raw meat including poultry, egg or duck dishes.
- There is no vaccine against this novel coronavirus.
- Public Health England recommends against using masks outside clinical settings (personal communication PHE).

If you become unwell within 14 days of travel to Wuhan, China:

- Seek prompt medical advice if ill with breathing difficulties by calling your GP or dialling 111, informing them about your recent travel and that you may have been exposed.
- Try to limit contact with others if you become unwell after travel until you have been assessed by a health professional.
- When coughing and sneezing, use tissues, disposing of used tissues carefully and promptly and washing your hands.

Advice for health professionals

Public Health England has published information on Wuhan novel coronavirus, including the information on the [assessment and management of possible cases](#) and [interim guidance for those working in primary care](#).

The risk to the UK public is considered to be low. There remains a risk of imported cases to the UK. Health professionals should remain vigilant for symptomatic individuals who have returned from travel to Wuhan, China, within the last 14 days.

Resources

- [Wuhan novel coronavirus in brief](#)
- [World Health Organization: Coronavirus](#)
- [Public Health England: Wuhan novel coronavirus \(WN-CoV\)](#)

References

1. [World Health Organization. Pneumonia of unknown cause-China. 5 January 2020 \[Accessed 22 January 2020\]](#)
2. [World Health Organization. Novel Coronavirus-China. 12 January 2020 \[Accessed 22 January 2020\]](#)
3. [Public Health England. Wuhan novel coronavirus: epidemiology, virology and clinical features 22 January 2020. \[Accessed 22 January 2020\]](#)
4. [National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China. Epidemic situation of new coronavirus infection on January 22, 2020. \[Accessed 22 January 2020\]](#)