

The Coronavirus and how to protect yourself



What is the Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause respiratory tract illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

How did it start?

The first case was identified in Wuhan, China, and is believed to have passed from an animal to a human at a seafood market. Human coronavirus most commonly spreads from an infected person through:



The air by coughing and sneezing



Close personal contact such as shaking or touching hands



Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.

Who does it affect and what is the seriousness?

Anyone can catch a virus unless they have been immunised against it. As this is a new virus, a vaccination is about a year away. There is a chance that those with a weakened immune system, the elderly and the very young, the virus could cause a lower and more serious respiratory tract illness like pneumonia or bronchitis.

How do you know if you have the coronavirus?

The incubation period is 10 days, so you could actually have the virus but not show symptoms for several days. This means you could potentially pass it on to others without knowing you are even sick.

Symptoms could include:

- Runny nose
- Fever
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Headache
- Feeling unwell

How do I keep myself and my whanau safe from the coronavirus?



This virus has an incubation period of 10 days so even if you don't feel sick, you might be a carrier. If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider.



- (1) Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitiser) or soap and water.
- (2) When washing hands with soap and water, wash for at least 20 seconds.
- (3) Carry hand sanitiser in the car and with you so you can sanitise when necessary or no soap is supplied.



Carry a small bottle of sanitiser with you wherever you go – sanitise after shaking hands, touching furniture, Eftpos and ATM machines, handrails, tables, doors, door handles etc in public places, and if you use a wharepuku that does not supply soap.



Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough. When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands.



When visiting live markets in areas currently experiencing cases of novel coronavirus, avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals and surfaces in contact with animals;



Avoid eating raw or undercooked animal products. Handle raw meat, milk or animal organs with care to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods and wash and clean hands and surfaces etc. well as per good food safety practices.