

**2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Announcement
February 5, 2020**

During the past weeks, the emerging Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) concern has evoked a number of questions about how our campus and local public health units are responding to this evolving situation. We would like to share some updates and information with you, particularly steps that you can take to help reduce your risk of being infected with this virus and how to respond if you believe you have been infected.

Current Status Updates Regarding Coronavirus and Influenza

- At this time, there have been no diagnosed cases or patients under investigation (PUIs) of Novel Coronavirus within Coles County.
- As of Sunday, February 2, 2020, the CDC had confirmed 11 positive cases throughout the United States, with two cases in Illinois.
- Since Monday, January 27, EIU Health and Counseling Services Medical Clinic has screened all students presenting with fever and/or respiratory symptoms for Novel Coronavirus and Influenza.
- Currently, the greater risk of infection for our campus community centers around Influenza. University officials will continue to advocate measures which will protect against both Influenza and Novel Coronavirus and monitor the Novel Coronavirus concern to determine if the virus is impacting our campus.

EIU Novel Coronavirus Information Page

- For official notices and updates regarding the Novel Coronavirus, individuals should visit the Eastern Illinois University Novel Coronavirus information page at <https://www.eiu.edu/health/2019-nCoV.php>. This page also includes links to information and updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) regarding the Novel Coronavirus outbreak.

Virus Transmission

Similar to how Influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread, human coronaviruses appear to be most commonly spread from an infected person to others through:

- the air by coughing and sneezing
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands

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

Prevention

EIU Health and Counseling Services recommend the following ways to protect yourself and others from catching or spreading respiratory illnesses like the Novel Coronavirus and Influenza:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick (i.e. within 6 feet).
- Get a flu shot! They are still available **for free** to students through the HCS Medical Clinic.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
- Stay home and avoid close contact with others if you are sick.
- Get adequate rest.
- Eat well and stay hydrated.

Symptoms

Common human coronaviruses usually cause mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illnesses, like the common cold and Influenza. These illnesses typically last for a short amount of time. Symptoms may include:

- fever
- symptoms of lower-respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)
- lower-respiratory tract illnesses, such as pneumonia or bronchitis

Seeking Medical Care

- Medical care should be sought immediately should an individual experience
 - a fever AND lower-respiratory symptoms/illness AND
 - close contact with a confirmed Novel Coronavirus patient or a patient under investigation OR with someone who has traveled to mainland China 14 days prior to the onset of symptoms.
- Students who believe they might be experiencing symptoms related to Coronavirus or Influenza infection should seek medical care from the Health and Counseling Services Medical Clinic, located within the Human Services Building, Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., 217-581-3013. If urgent care is needed after regular hours, students should report to the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center Emergency Department, 217-348-2551.
- Faculty or staff who are concerned about their health or believe they might be experiencing symptoms should call their regular healthcare provider for guidance.

University/Institutional Response

- The HCS Medical Clinic staff will continue to screen all students for Novel Coronavirus who presented with flu-like symptoms.
- All students with upper-respiratory symptoms will continue to be masked upon entry to the Medical Clinic.
- The use of a mask is a precautionary measure for multiple respiratory illnesses, including Influenza and the Novel Coronavirus.
- Medical Clinic staff will continue to follow CDC and IDPH guidelines and recommendations regarding the screening, assessment, treatment, and testing of possible patients under investigation (PUIs). Consultation with the Coles County Health Department will occur if a student meets criteria for a PUI.
- Increased marketing and promotions concerning upper-respiratory illness prevention strategies (e.g., hand hygiene) is being implemented through the HCS Health Education Resource Center.
- The university follows the recommendations of the CDC and IDPH.

We continue to work closely with local, state, and national public health organizations regarding the Novel Coronavirus concern and will take necessary precautions to safeguard the health and wellness of our campus community.

Sincerely,

Eric S. Davidson, Ph.D., MCHES, CSPS
Interim Director,
EIU Health and Counseling Services

Joseph R. Baumgart, M.D., FACOG
Medical Director,
EIU Health and Counseling Services