

# Coronavirus – what you need to know



We are still learning more about this new virus. The likelihood of an imported case is high. The risk of an ongoing outbreak in New Zealand remains low.

## How worried should I be?

- Your chances of catching the coronavirus in New Zealand are very low.
- It is highly unlikely you will catch the virus
  - walking down the street,
  - in a supermarket or
  - on public transport.
- Coronavirus is slightly more infectious than the flu – you are only likely to catch it if you are close to someone with the virus. Most people catch the virus from someone at home, a close workmate or someone they spend time with.
- People will not be moving around the community if they are suspected of having the virus – they will be in isolation. Their family and anyone they may have infected will also be asked to stay at home.

## How serious is coronavirus?

- People are being infected, mainly in China.
- Most people have a mild illness.
- People of all ages are being infected, but older people and those with medical conditions seem most likely to get seriously ill.

## How do I protect myself and my family?

Everyone should protect themselves from the virus, as you would for the flu –

- Washing your hands regularly, or using hand sanitiser, is the best way to avoid this illness.
- As with other illnesses, do not go to work or school if you are sick.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or clothing, and wash hands afterwards
- Avoid being close to people who are sick
- Wear a mask only if you are coughing and sneezing.
- Washing your hands often and covering coughs and sneezes will do more to protect you from the virus than a mask.
- If you are sharing food, use utensils to serve the food and keep your personal spoon, fork, or chopsticks separate to avoid transmission through saliva.

## Where can I find more information?

Information is updated on the Ministry of Health  
[www.health.govt.nz/coronavirus](http://www.health.govt.nz/coronavirus).

You can also call your local doctor or Healthline on 0800 611 116.