

City of Newton



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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Coronavirus Information for Newton Residents January 28, 2020

The Newton Health and Human Services (HHS) Department is sharing information to help keep the public informed about a respiratory illness caused by a new coronavirus -- named "2019-nCoV" -- that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China and continues to spread.

The department is monitoring the latest information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). At this time, no special measures are recommended for local public health departments or schools. This situation is evolving, and if any specific instructions are provided, Newton HHS will communicate them to the community.

The HHS Department, which includes Newton's public school nurses, tracks illness in the schools and participates regularly in CDC and MDPH conference calls to monitor emerging information.

The best place for the latest nationwide updates on this evolving situation is directly from CDC at www.cdc.gov/nCoV

The HHS department will post local updates such as this one to the City of Newton website at www.newtonma.gov

Respiratory Illness Prevention

Because it is cold and flu season, it is important to remind people of the elevated risk of exposure to respiratory illnesses including influenza. Flu shot appointments are still available for all people 6 months and older by calling the public health nurse at (617) 796-1420. Flu severity in Massachusetts has increased from moderate to high, according to the MDPH flu activity report <https://www.mass.gov/report/2019-2020-season-weekly-flu-reports>

The following precautionary actions will help prevent respiratory viruses, including seasonal influenza and Coronavirus:

- 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.

Travelers' Health

CDC is providing updates for travelers at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

As of 1/28/2020, the CDC advises individuals who have traveled to China in the last 14 days and develop a fever, cough or have difficulty breathing to:

- Seek medical care right away
- Call ahead before going to see a doctor or emergency room
- Tell them your symptoms and that you were in China

Questions?

Questions may be directed to the city's Health and Human Services Department at (617) 796-1420.