



HEALTH UPDATE: Novel Coronavirus February 2, 2020

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR CLINICIANS

Lane County Public Health Department 24/7/365 REPORTING: 541-682-4041

New cases of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) continue to occur. The CDC has updated screening recommendations and clarified other response activities. This update captures the new CDC recommendations.

Patient Screening

Health care providers must obtain a detailed travel history for patients presenting with fever and acute respiratory illness. Patients with fever and lower respiratory illness are of greatest concern. All clinical facilities should be able to perform an initial travel screening and health assessment. **There is no reason to directly refer patients to urgent care or emergency departments for such assessments. Doing so may delay appropriate care and increase infectious risk in our community.**

Patients meeting criteria in the chart below should be evaluated as a PUI (Patient Under Investigation). Any facility identifying a PUI should call Lane County Public Health **immediately** at 541-682-4041.

Scenario	Clinical Features	&	Epidemiologic Risk
1)	Fever ¹ or signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough or shortness of breath)	AND	Any person, including health care workers, who has had close contact ² with a laboratory-confirmed ^{3,4} 2019-nCoV patient within 14 days of symptom onset
OR			
2)	Fever ¹ and signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath)	AND	A history of travel from Hubei Province, China ⁵ within 14 days of symptom onset
OR			
3)	Fever ¹ and signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) requiring hospitalization ⁴	AND	A history of travel from mainland China ⁵ within 14 days of symptom onset

Further information on patient screening and the definitions of fever, close contact, and laboratory confirmed as written in the chart above are available here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>

Testing

Patients identified as a PUI **must be isolated immediately**, preferably in a negative-pressure room, **and placed under standard, contact, and airborne precautions**, along with eye protection. If patient does not need to be admitted, follow CDC home care guidance, as noted here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-home-care.html>

Specimen Collection

CDC recommends collection of specimens from the lower and upper respiratory tracts as well as serum. All specimens should be stored at 2–8°F, properly labeled, and shipped overnight on an ice pack. Testing for the virus is currently available only at CDC, but plans are for all 50 “State Public Health Labs” to have testing capacity soon. To arrange for testing approval and specimen shipment call Lane County Public Health: 541-682-4041. Further specimen collection guidance is available here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>

Healthcare Infection Control

CDC recommends standard, contact, and airborne precautions with eye protection for healthcare workers evaluating a possible case of 2019-nCoV. When possible, use phone triage and assessment to do a detailed travel history and determine if patients who might have 2019-nCoV need to be seen in person. Now is also a good time to review and update infection control policies, including mask use, negative pressure rooms, and patient transport. Preparedness checklists are available here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/preparedness-checklists.html>

Follow guidance from your facility’s infection control practitioners, which may include the following:

- Use a negative pressure room if available. Regardless of the type room being used, keep exam room door closed.
- If a person with possible 2019-nCoV arrives unexpectedly, mask the patient and room them promptly.
- If the patient is already in the clinic or waiting room, mask and room them immediately.
- If possible, schedule possible 2019-nCoV patients as the last patient of the day.
- If feasible, consider patient evaluation outdoors at least 30 feet away from others. Once the patient is masked, escort the patient into the building for rooming.
- If possible, suspected 2019-nCoV patients should be escorted into the building via an entrance that allows them to access an exam room without exposing others.
- Minimize the number of healthcare workers interacting with the patient; caregivers should follow CDC guidance, which includes eye protection and an N-95 mask or higher level of respiratory protection.
- Collect all specimens and perform clinical interventions in the exam room if possible.
- The exam room should not be used until 2 hours after the patient has left and the room has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.