
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY
STATUS UPDATE ON COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS
FEBRUARY 27, 2020

Situational Update

The Riverside County Department of Public Health continues to track the epidemic of COVID-19 disease in multiple countries. As of February 26, 82,549 cases were recorded in 50 countries with 2,810 worldwide deaths. 78,497 of these cases are in mainland China and 65,596 cases are in Hubei province, with the capital city of Wuhan believed to be the epicenter. Secondary outbreaks are now reported in South Korea (1,766) and Italy (528), along with 705 travelers infected on the *Diamond Princess* cruise liner currently in lockdown off the Japanese coast.

In the United States, 60 cases have been recorded, 42 of these being individuals repatriated from the *Diamond Princess* cruise liner. Only two US cases have been attributed to person-to-person transmission. A third case at UC Davis with an unknown exposure is being reviewed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In California, 10 cases have been recorded. Riverside County housed a repatriation flight at March Air Reserve Base for the full 14-day quarantine period and released all 195 individuals on that flight on February 11. The March Air Reserve Base quarantine station closed on February 22 with no reports of COVID-19 in any travelers quarantined there. Riverside County has recorded one case in a resident, but this individual was repatriated from the *Diamond Princess* and has had no travel to the county since leaving the cruise liner. **No exposures to this individual are known in Riverside County, and no cases of community COVID-19 have been detected in the County.**

Although extraordinary reports of incubation periods beyond 14 days have been anecdotally reported by Chinese health authorities, these reports do not account for the elevated probability of multiple exposures in high prevalence regions. No reports of incubation periods beyond 14 days have come from lower-prevalence regions, and both the WHO and the CDC continue to use a **14-day incubation period as an upper bound.**

There are no current recommendations for therapy beyond supportive care, and while there are reports that vaccines are in the pipeline, the earliest estimate for their general availability would be at least one year. Remdesivir has been employed in some limited clinical trials but is not a general recommendation. Although we are hopeful testing will be more widely available, currently **all testing for COVID-19 disease must be performed by the CDC after consultation with the local health department.**

Returning Travelers

Foreign nationals are currently **not allowed to return** to the United States if they have travelled to China within the last 14 days.

American citizens, lawful permanent residents and their families who have travelled to China within the last 14 days will be directed to one of 11 airports, including Los Angeles International Airport, for health screening and are subject to quarantine. Symptomatic individuals are evaluated at these airports and sent to health care facilities as acuity warrants. Asymptomatic individuals who had traveled to *Hubei province* will be **mandatorily quarantined** for up to 14 days in specified facilities. Travelers to other Chinese regions are referred to their local health departments for active monitoring and home quarantine for up to 14 days.

The CDC has Level 3 travel advisories for China and South Korea, but only Chinese travel is currently subject to the restrictions above. These travelers are handled by local and national public health authorities and any returning traveler within the last 14 days contacting your office directly should be directed to the Department of Public Health at 951 358 5107.

Actions Requested of Clinicians

The current CDC recommendations for determining Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) is at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-criteria.html> .

Because many of the symptoms referenced are typical of many viral syndromes, most notoriously influenza, **confirmation of an epidemiologic link is critical** to determining whether a symptomatic patient is appropriate for testing. **Epidemiologic risk is currently defined** as any person with close contact to a *laboratory-confirmed* case of COVID-19, or a history of travel to mainland China and particularly Hubei province *within the 14 days prior to symptom onset*. Individuals who were in specific regions of Italy, Iran and South Korea may be candidates for testing but should be reviewed with RUHS-PH and the CDC. **All testing requests must go through RUHS-PH. Please call 951 358 5107 during business hours, or after hours 951 782 2974 for on-call if urgent or emergent.**

Although there is no confirmed community spread of COVID-19 in the United States currently, providers may still recommend to patients with flu-like symptoms that they **call first and be assessed**. A **thorough travel history with exact cities and dates of travel** is strongly advised, as a patient lacking appropriate travel history is **unlikely to have the disease**. Providers who wish to direct a case of concern to higher levels of care should

coordinate with any intended destination facility so that the patient can be quickly masked and moved to respiratory isolation, and does not remain in waiting areas for extended periods of time.

Emergency departments and urgent care departments may wish to post signage advising recent travelers to affected areas within the last two weeks who are currently ill to call ahead or contact triage staff as soon as they arrive.

Providers who are uncertain what to do with a suspect case or believe they have a case that meets the PUI definition may call 951 358 5107 during regular business hours, or the emergency on-call line at 951 782 2974 if an urgent or emergent case manifests after hours.

Resources

RUHS-PH COVID-19 page: <http://rivcoph.org/coronavirus/>

CDC COVID-19 page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

Current CDC travel advisories: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

Further revisions to this health advisory will occur as the situation changes.

We appreciate your help in keeping all residents of Riverside County healthy.

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