ALL ACADEMICS, STAFF AND STUDENTS AT UC SAN DIEGO - Including Health

SUBJECT: 2019 Novel Coronavirus Acute Respiratory Disease Update: IMPORTANT UPDATE Information for the UC San Diego Community

UC San Diego continues to be vigilant in monitoring the progression of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) worldwide. Despite the declaration by the World Health Organization of a public health emergency of international concern, it is important to note that there are no known confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV in San Diego at this time.

However, as the numbers of cases has continued to expand and both the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State Department have warned against non-essential travel to China, the University of California has called for a temporary stop of non-essential travel to the affected region. We are developing a review and approval process to determine which travel to China is essential and if postponing is an option.

We understand that members of the community are worried about the virus and how it may impact us. Rest assured, your health and wellbeing is our top priority. Our goal is to keep you informed and to provide a safe campus environment for all students, employees and visitors.

Our leadership and health care experts are in continuous contact with the CDC, the California Department of Public Health, and San Diego County Public Health for updated information on the outbreak. We are making adjustments to the protocols to screen, identify and diagnose potential cases of 2019-nCoV. If cases occur, UC San Diego will collaborate with the CDC and San Diego Public Health to prevent,
isolate, and control the spread of this infection.

The CDC has expanded the area of travel concern to encompass Hubei Provence and created a framework to identify and isolate patients meeting criteria for 2019-nCoV testing. The criteria is based on the highest to lowest probability of infection, ranging from those who have been in close contact with a patient with a laboratory confirmed diagnosis of 2019-nCoV, to patients who are experiencing fever and cough and those who have traveled to the province of Hubei within 14 days of symptom onset.

Persons who have traveled to mainland China within the past 14 days should self-monitor for symptoms of acute respiratory infection including fever and cough or other flu-like symptoms. If you have these symptoms and travel history within the past 14 days, please contact Student Health or your healthcare provider. Until you have a medical evaluation, take precautionary steps to reduce possible exposure to others by covering your cough and sneezes, washing your hands frequently and avoiding close contact (less than 6 feet or 2 meters) with other people.

This Q&A may provide helpful information about 2019-nCoV.

Q: Is 2019-nCoV spreading in the U.S?
A: While the number of cases in the U.S. has risen, most cases continue to be patients who contracted the virus during a visit to impacted regions in China. The first instance of person-to-person transmission of the virus in the U.S. was recently identified in a spouse. Still, according to the CDC risk of acquiring the disease in the U.S. is low.

Q: How can I protect myself?
A: The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Everyday preventive actions to reduce exposure include:

* 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 with an acute respiratory illness.
* Stay home when you are sick with an acute respiratory illness.
* Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If no tissue is available, cough into your sleeve or clothing, not your hands.
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Q: I am a student and think I may have a respiratory virus. Can Student Health Services help me?
A: Yes. Student Health Services has developed triage screening (by phone and at front desks) and implemented additional protocols to identify persons who might be infected with 2019 n-CoV. Please call 858-534-3300 for guidance and to determine if you need to be seen by a provider. You may also go to http://myStudentChart.ucsd.edu/shs/ and login with your Student AD to send a message to “Ask-a-Nurse.”

Q. Does a student with respiratory illness need to visit Student Health to receive a note to be excused from class?
A. The student should call Student Health Services to be evaluated. If the student is advised by Student Health to avoid public areas, this guidance will serve as a “note” to excuse the student from class.

Q: Should I wear a respiratory mask on campus?
A: Masks will not protect you from getting a respiratory illness, while washing your hands often and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose and mouth, keeping a distance from people who are visibly sneezing and coughing will help decrease the risk. Student Health provides masks to students while they are being evaluated who have fever or respiratory symptoms, regardless of insurance. Mask use is an effective prevention tool in the healthcare environment. Mask use by the general public has not been shown to be effective.

Q: I feel anxious about the news and want to talk about it. Does the university have resources for me?
A: Yes. If you are experiencing heightened feelings of anxiety about the virus and would like to access counseling services, there are resources
available. If you are a student, please call Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 858-534-3755. If you are a campus employee, call the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) at 858-534-5523. If you are a UC San Diego Health employee, please contact your Employee Assistance Program provider aligned with your medical coverage or call 619-543-3200.

Q: How are our Students and Scholars who may be traveling internationally being guided at this time?
A: UC San Diego is tracking the locations of our students traveling internationally and providing guidance to students who may travel to high-risk areas in China. Currently, no UC San Diego student is studying abroad in these locations. At this time, the CDC and State Department recommend travelers to avoid all nonessential travel to China. More importantly, the University of California Office of the President has put a hold on non-essential travel to mainland China. It also recommends that travelers practice easy health precautions, including avoiding close contact with people who are visibly sick, practicing excellent hand hygiene and covering coughs and sneezes.

Q: What if I already have a scheduled work trip to China?
A: We are currently evaluating the impact to staff and faculty who have pre-existing travel plans to China and will determine on a case-by-case basis which travel may need to be postponed. Please note, you may want to check your current flight plans as some U.S. airline carriers are canceling or limiting flights to China.

As a community, UC San Diego is firmly committed to creating a culture of inclusion on our campus, a goal we continue to strive toward and from which we will not waver. Respect and dignity for all—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability or background—are of paramount importance to our mission as an educational institution.

For more information on 2019-nCoV, the campus has we have posted a webinar on Blink hosted by Francesca Torriani, MD, and Stace San Miguel, MD, explaining the coronavirus, its spread and UC San Diego's current plan of action. We will continue to post updates here: https://blink.ucsd.edu/safety/resources/public-health/coronavirus.html.

We will continue to communicate with you as new information is learned.
Please visit the CDC website, which is updated daily, for the latest information: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.

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