

# Discovery Health MD Newsletter

## CORONAVIRUS AND FLU SEASON

### *Now is the time to prepare*

By Dr. Ann Jarris, CEO Discovery Health MD

The CDC is closely monitoring an outbreak of a new coronavirus in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, that began in December 2019 and is potentially spreading between people. This is a rapidly evolving situation with daily updates from the CDC.



Symptoms to watch out for are: fever and respiratory symptoms like cough or shortness of breath in someone who, in the last 14 days before symptom onset, traveled from Wuhan City, China or had close contact with a person under investigation for or documented to have this virus when ill.

There is no specific treatment or anti-viral medication for this. If someone meets the criteria above, they should contact their healthcare provider for further instructions.

Companies should consider screening crewmembers to ask about recent travel to China or close contact to people who may have this virus, then work with their medical advisors to develop strategies to manage potential exposures.

In addition to coronaviruses, flu and cold season is in full swing. Transmission of these viruses occurs when an infected person coughs or sneezes and spreads the virus through respiratory droplets. Encourage crewmembers to get vaccinated against influenza and be vigilant about cough and hand hygiene. Encourage people to wear masks. Station a crewmember outside the galley at mealtimes to remind people to use hand sanitizer and wash hands. Encourage people to cough or sneeze into their elbows instead of their hands.

If a crewmember develops flu-like symptoms, such as the rapid onset of fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, headache or fatigue, consult with your medical advisory service to decide if an anti-viral medication like oseltamivir (Tamiflu) is appropriate. Make sure crewmembers stay hydrated and pay close attention to the possibility of a developing pneumonia.

The best prevention for respiratory illnesses is to make sure you have all your immunizations, get plenty of rest, wash your hands frequently, sanitize surfaces often, and make sure your crew is washing their hands, using hand sanitizer, and masking.



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# HEALTH ALERT: *Travelers from Wuhan, China*

There is an outbreak of pneumonia in Wuhan, China caused by a new type of coronavirus.

If you have been in Wuhan within the past 2 weeks and develop a fever, cough, or have difficulty breathing, 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 WUHAN.
- GIVE THEM THIS CARD.

## Triage Staff/Clinicians:

- Use standard, contact, and airborne precautions, and eye protection.
- Notify infection control and your state/local health department immediately.



For more information: [www.cdc.gov/wuhan](http://www.cdc.gov/wuhan)