



# Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

## Information for Parents

*An outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in late December 2019.*

## Exclusion from School or Early Childhood Centres

If you have been informed by Public Health authorities that your child is a close contact of a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), even if they don't have symptoms, they cannot attend school or childcare until Public Health informs you that it is safe for them to do so.

If your child has recently travelled to mainland China and has developed symptoms (listed below), contact your usual doctor for assessment who will liaise with Public Health authorities and determine whether or not your child needs to be excluded from school or child care.

If your child has recently travelled to mainland China and has not developed any of the symptoms (listed below), they may attend their school or early childhood centre and should not be excluded.

## What is this virus?

Coronaviruses can make humans and animals sick. Some coronaviruses can cause illness similar to the common cold and others can cause more serious diseases, including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

The virus originating in Hubei Province, China is called 'novel' because it is new. It had not been detected before this outbreak. Most people infected live in, or travelled to, Hubei Province, China. There have been cases of 2019-nCoV reported in other Chinese provinces and other countries. It is likely that the virus originally came from an animal, and there is now evidence that it can spread from person-to-person.

## What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include (but are not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath.

## What if my child is sick now or within 14 days of being in Hubei Province?

If your child develops mild symptoms:

- keep your child at home and do not send them to school or child care;
- call your usual doctor or local hospital and tell them your child may have novel coronavirus infection; and
- when you get to the doctor's clinic or hospital, tell them again that your child may have novel coronavirus.

If your child has serious symptoms such as shortness of breath:

- call **000** and ask for an ambulance; and
- tell the paramedic that your child may have novel coronavirus infection.
- your doctor will test your child for 2019-nCoV and provide advice on management. You will also be contacted by Public Health officers who will provide you with more information.

Students with symptoms should be excluded from attending schools and early childhood centres until symptoms have resolved. If they have been diagnosed with 2019-CoV they should not attend school or childcare until they are cleared by public health authorities. If students have other respiratory illness (i.e. flu), they should not attend school irrespective of whether there is a concern about nCoV.

## How can I help prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV?

- teach and encourage your children to wash their hands often with soap and water before and after eating as well as after attending the toilet;
- avoid contact with others by keeping children home if they are unwell;
- teaching children to cough and sneeze into their elbow; and
- while it's not possible to avoid touching, kissing, and hugging children, parents and guardians should do their best to follow these steps too.

## Where can I get more information?

Visit the Australian Government Department of Health homepage at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Call the Public Health Information Line on 1800 044 599.

Contact your state or territory public health agency:

- ACT call 02 5124 9213 during business hours or (02) 9962 4155 after hours
- NSW call 1300 066 055
- NT call 08 8922 8044
- Qld call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- SA call 1300 232 272
- Tas call 1800 671 738
- Vic call 1300 651 160
- WA visit <https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/> or call your local [public health unit](#)