



Update on novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) INFORMATION FOR WA HOSPITAL CLINICIANS

KEY POINTS

- Consider 2019-nCoV in patients who have travelled to (including transit through) mainland China in the 14 days before onset of illness, who are presenting with fever OR acute respiratory infection (e.g. shortness of breath or cough) with or without fever.
- Use contact and droplet precautions when collecting respiratory specimens in cases that are asymptomatic or have mild illness in the community.
- Patients with severe symptoms suggestive of pneumonia should be managed in a hospital with collection of respiratory specimens in a negative pressure room using contact and airborne precautions.
- For up to date information refer to the [WA novel coronavirus](#) webpage.

This alert updates the criteria for assessment for 2019-nCoV and the personal protective equipment (PPE) required when collecting respiratory samples.

Patients meeting the following criteria should be assessed for 2019-nCoV:

Travel to (including transit through) mainland China in the 14 days before the onset of illness,
OR close or casual contact in 14 days before illness onset with a confirmed case of 2019-nCoV
AND

fever OR acute respiratory infection (e.g. shortness of breath or cough) with or without fever

If testing for 2019-nCoV is required:

- **Patients with no respiratory symptoms or mild illness:** collection of respiratory specimens is considered low risk, use of contact and droplet precautions only is needed:
 - Use a disposable fluid resistant gown, gloves, surgical mask, and eye protection (goggle or face shield)
 - collect nose and throat swabs or nasopharyngeal swab; stand slightly to the side of the patient to avoid exposure to respiratory secretions, should the patient cough or sneeze
 - collect in a single room with the door shut, the room does not need to be left empty after sample collection
 - collect respiratory specimens and serum blood sample “to save”
- **Patients with severe symptoms suggestive of pneumonia**, e.g. fever and breathing difficulty, or frequent, severe or productive coughing episodes, are more likely to have a higher viral load, contact and airborne precautions should be observed:
 - if possible collect samples in a negative pressure isolation room, if this is not possible use a room from which air does not circulate to other areas, keep the door closed and leave it vacant for at least 30 minutes afterwards.
 - wear gown, gloves, eye protection (goggles or face shield) and P2/N95 respirator which should be fit checked
 - specimens as above AND collection of sputum for PCR
- Refer to the [2019-nCoV Series of National Guidelines](#) for more information.

2019-nCoV is URGENTLY NOTIFIABLE BY PHONE: Call your local public health unit and speak to the Public Health Physician

Metro 9222 8588 / 1300 MCDWA (1300623292)	Kimberley 9194 1630	South West 9781 2350
Goldfields 9080 8200	Midwest 9956 1985	Wheatbelt 9690 1720
Great Southern 9842 7500	Pilbara 9174 1660	After hours/OnCall 9328 0553

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