



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Health

Public Notice on Novel Coronavirus

The Ministry of Health requests the general public and especially travellers to take special preventive measures following the Novel Coronavirus outbreak confirmed by World Health Organization (WHO) which was reported in China, Thailand, Japan and the Republic of South Korea. The total number of Coronavirus confirmed cases have reached 205 to date including 3 deaths. All reported deaths have been in Wuhan, China.

Rwanda is closely working with WHO to implement necessary preparedness activities and will keep strengthening surveillance for pneumonia. Symptoms include fever, cough and difficulty breathing.

Most patients have been linked to a large wholesale fish and live animal market in Wuhan, Hubei province of China. The market has been decontaminated and closed since January 1, 2020. The Government of China confirmed the spread from human to human on this January 20, 2020.

The Rwanda Ministry of Health advises that people travelling to the mentioned countries to take the following extra measures for their safety:

- Avoid animals (alive or dead), animal markets, and products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat);
- Avoid contact with sick people;
- Wash hands often with soap and clean water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you don't have access to clean water and soap;

If you travelled to the affected countries and feel sick, you are advised to:

- Seek medical care immediately and inform medical personnel about your recent travels and symptoms;
- Avoid travelling while sick;
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.

.....**End**

For more information, please contact:

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About Novel Coronavirus

What is Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from common cold to more severe disease such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV). Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, runny nose, cough, shortness of breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, kidney failure and even death.

How is it transmitted?

Human coronaviruses mostly spread from an infected person to others through:

- *Air by Coughing;*
- *Close personal contact such as touching or shaking hands;*
- *Touching an object or surface with the virus and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands;*
- *Rarely through fecal contamination.*

Can Coronaviruses be treated?

Currently there are no specific treatments for the illness. Treatment is mainly supportive and may include:

- *Antibiotics to treat bacteria that cause pneumonia*
- *Antiviral medications*
- *Assisting with breathing using ventilators to deliver oxygen*

Why is novel Coronavirus a concern?

- *An outbreak of Pneumonia reported in China, Thailand, Japan and the Republic of South Korea and confirmed cases have reached 205.*
- *Preliminary laboratory findings have identified it to be caused by a novel coronavirus.*
- *Due to the frequent flights from Rwanda to China and Thailand, a possible risk of an imported case cannot be excluded.*