

Novel Coronavirus: Maryland EMS Update

EMS Infectious Diseases Program

Due to the recent outbreak of a novel coronavirus in mainland China, MIEMSS urges prehospital EMS clinicians to take the following actions:

- 1. Ask patients about recent travel, particularly those with fever and acute respiratory illness**
- 2. Don appropriate PPE when patients meet the following Person Under Investigation (PUI) criteria**
- 3. If a patient meets PUI criteria, EMS clinicians should transport to the appropriate receiving hospital, ensuring that they contact the hospital via EMRC before initiating transport, utilizing the term “PUI” when requesting a med channel for consult**

Patient Under Investigation (PUI) Criteria

Clinical Features		Epidemiologic Risk
Fever or signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough or shortness of breath)	AND	Any person, including health care workers, who has had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed 2019-novel Coronavirus patient within 14 days of symptom onset
Fever and signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath)	AND	A history of travel from mainland China within 14 days of symptom onset

PPE Recommendations: If patient meets PUI criteria, clinicians should don gloves, gowns, eye protection, and fit-tested N-95 level or higher respirators. A surgical mask, NOT an N-95, should be placed on the patient.

Ambulance Decontamination: Any visibly soiled surface must first be decontaminated using an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant according to directions on the label. Disinfect all potentially contaminated surfaces including the stretcher with an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant according to directions on the label. Medical equipment (stethoscope, BP cuff, etc.) making patient contact should be disposable or cleaned and disinfected using appropriate disinfectants before use on another patient.

References and Resources:

<http://www.miemss.org/home/infectious-diseases>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html#risk-assessment>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>



Although the 2019 Novel Coronavirus is an evolving and concerning disease, the spread of seasonal influenza and other infectious diseases also remain a concern. EMS clinicians should place a surgical mask on any patient presenting with the signs and symptoms of lower respiratory illness while donning the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and asking about travel history.

Utilization of standard precautions, staying current with recommended vaccinations, and utilizing robust hand hygiene practices remain the best ways to prevent the spread of infectious disease.



INTERIM GUIDANCE, EPIDEMIOLOGICAL RISK AREA AND OTHER FACTORS SUBJECT TO CHANGE