

Health Update: Coronavirus & Food Safety

Who is most at risk of infection?

The Australian Government Department of Health has established a <u>website</u> with up-to-date information on the virus.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a newly identified virus that can cause respiratory illness, including pneumonia. It isn't known how infection occurs, but it is thought to spread person-to-person through close contact. Good Hygiene is Vital!

Experience tells us that the Elderly, people with compromised immune systems, young children and those with diagnosed heart and lung conditions are most at risk of developing complications if they contract an infection like this.

Can the virus be transmitted through food?

Transmission through food is unlikely and there is no evidence of this occurring with novel coronavirus to date, however investigations into how the virus spreads are continuing.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has released a <u>statement</u> noting there is currently no evidence that food is a likely source or route of transmission of the virus.



General food safety advice

Everyone should practice good hygiene when preparing and handling food.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued precautionary recommendations including advice on good hygiene practices during food handling and preparation, they include:

- Washing hands between handling raw and cooked foods
- Thorough cooking and proper handling of meat products
- Covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing
- Avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness, such as coughing and sneezing

Good Hygiene and Sanitation

Good hygiene and sanitation are important to avoid cross contamination between raw or undercooked foods and cooked or ready to eat foods in the kitchen.

As an added precaution, if you have suspected symptoms of respiratory illness you should avoid preparing food for other people and seek medical attention.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Information continues to come to light as more is learned about this new infection.

The most common symptoms are:

- Fever
- Breathing difficulties such as breathlessness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue or tiredness





Resources & further information:

- 1. Information for AGED CARE: Novel coronavirus information for residents of residential care services and family members, in both English and Chinese
- 2. Information for CHILDCARE: Includes Downloads and resources
- 3. Daily Health Alert updated by Australian Government Dept of Health
- 4. www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/novel-coronavirus
- 5. www.health.gov.au/news/latest-information-about-novel-coronavirus
- **6. FSANZ:** https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/safety/Pages/NOVEL-CORONAVIRUS-AND-FOOD-SAFETY.aspx



By Rose Livingston, OSCAR Care Group

Reduce your risk of coronavirus

- WASH your hands often with soap and running water, for at least 20 seconds. Dry with paper towel or hand dryer.
- TRY not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- **COVER** your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
- **STAY** at home if you feel sick. If you take medication make sure you have enough.
- PHONE your doctor or the hotline 1800 675 398 if you need medical attention. They will tell you what to do.
- CONTINUE healthy habits: exercise, drink water, get plenty of sleep.
- WEARING a face mask is not necessary if you are well.
- BUY an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with over 60% alcohol.



If you are concerned, call the

Coronavirus hotline 1800 675 398 (24 hours)

Please keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only

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