

August Health Update: **Coronavirus**

Who is most at risk of infection?

Vulnerable people including the elderly & young children can be much more effected by viruses including Novel Coronavirus.

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.

Health workers are potentially at risk of infection if they are in close contact with a case of novel coronavirus infection.



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
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The Australian Government has advised that people who have been in contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases must be isolated in their home for 14 days after exposure. There have been over 18,500 known cases in Australia, and over 10,600 people have recovered.



How does COVID-19 spread?

When person-to-person spread has occurred with MERS and SARS, it is thought to have happened via respiratory droplets produced **when an infected person coughs or sneezes**, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread.

How do I protect myself, my family & the elderly or children in my care?

These common-sense precautions apply to many infectious diseases.

- Encourage people around you to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow. Dispose of the tissue into a bin and then wash your hands afterwards.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, particularly after going to the toilet and before eating or preparing food. If soap and water aren't available use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unclean hands.



Resources & further information:

1. **Daily Health Alert & Information** [updated by Australian Government Dept of Health](#)
2. www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/novel-coronavirus
3. **FSANZ:** <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/safety/Pages/NOVEL-CORONAVIRUS-AND-FOOD-SAFETY.aspx>



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