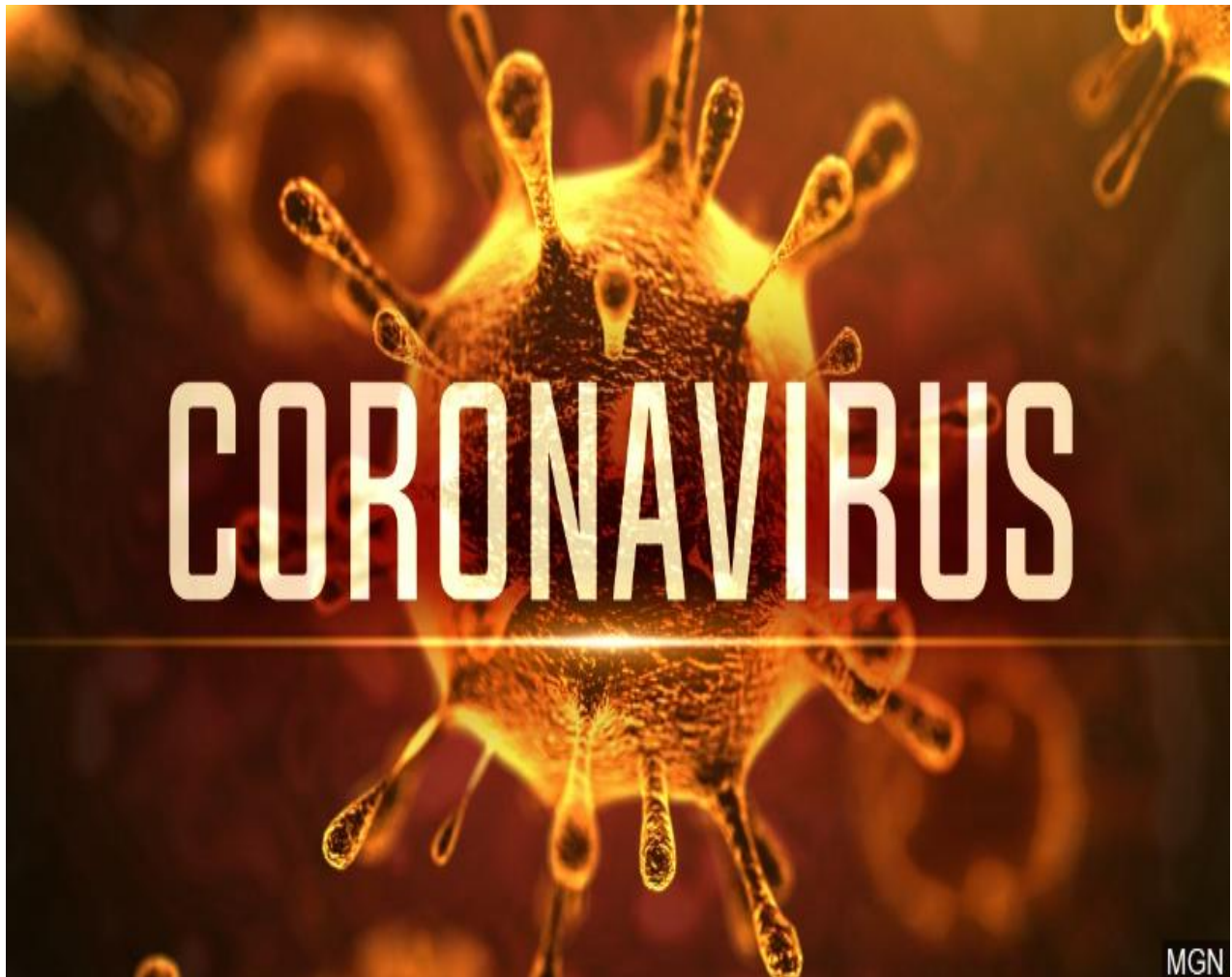


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Coronavirus: Here's What You Need to Know

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What is 2019 Novel Coronavirus?

The 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person-to-person. This virus was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in Barbados get 2019-nCoV?

At this time this virus has not been detected in Barbados. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in Wuhan or people who have traveled to Wuhan and other parts of

China. Since the first case identified in China, other cases have been confirmed in other parts of the Western Pacific, South East Asia, the USA, Canada and Europe. Because of travel between countries, it is possible for the virus to reach Barbados. Our Health authorities continue to closely monitor the situation.

How does 2019-nCoV spread?

With similar coronaviruses (MERS and SARS) person-to-person spread is thought to have happened mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other viruses that cause respiratory illness spread. There also may be some spread when a person touches a surface or object that has virus on it and then touches his or her own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

What are the symptoms of 2019-nCoV?

Patients with 2019-nCoV have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath.

What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients develop pneumonia in both lungs.

How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. This can be done by:

- avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- washing your hands often and with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

What if I have a respiratory illness?

Avoid spreading respiratory illness to others by:

- staying at home as much as is possible
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then throwing the tissue in the trash can
- cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently travelled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should get medical care immediately. Call the office of your health care provider before you go and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against 2019-nCoV.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for 2019-nCoV. People with 2019-nCoV can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.