

Feb. 11, 2020

Health tips

Flu and respiratory diseases including novel (new) coronavirus

It's currently flu and respiratory disease season and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends getting a flu vaccine, taking everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of germs, and taking flu antivirals if prescribed.

While the immediate risk of the new coronavirus to the American public is believed by CDC to be low at this time, everyone can help respond in a healthy manner.

CDC states the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed, and to follow recommendations to help prevent the spread of any respiratory viruses, including the following tips.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60-percent alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- If you're well, follow CDC's recommendations and don't wear face masks to protect yourself from respiratory viruses, including the novel coronavirus.

These are everyday preventive measures that can help stop the spread of several viruses.

In addition, CDC states there is likely very low risk that the virus can be spread from products or packaging shipped from China, because of poor survivability of coronaviruses on surfaces.

According to CDC, coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread most often by respiratory droplets. Also according to CDC, there currently is no evidence to support transmission of the new coronavirus associated with imported goods; and there have not been any reported cases of the virus in the United States associated with imported goods.

For current information and more details visit the CDC website, at www.cdc.gov.

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