Coronavirus Information for Dental Hygienists

As of January 30, 2020, 6 cases of Coronavirus (nCoV) in the United States have been confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC continues to test hundreds of additional samples.

According to the CDC, Coronavirus is a respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China with the ability to spread person-to-person. The risk to individuals is dependent on exposure. At this time, some people will have an increased risk of infection, for example healthcare workers caring for 2019-nCoV patients and other close contacts. For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus, the immediate health risk from 2019-nCoV is considered low.

Resources
The CDC has resources for health care professionals such as guidance for evaluating patients, infection control, preparedness checklists and more. Available here. The Healthcare Personnel Preparedness Checklist for 2019-nCoV is included at the end of this document. There is also general information available about the virus including symptoms and complications. Available here.

Criteria to Guide Evaluation of Patients Under Investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV
Patients in the United States who meet the following criteria should be evaluated as a PUI in association with the outbreak of 2019-nCoV in Wuhan City, China.

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<tr>
<th>Clinical Features</th>
<th>Epidemiologic Risk</th>
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<td>Fever and symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)</td>
<td>In the last 14 days before symptom onset, a history of travel from Wuhan City, China. – or – In the last 14 days before symptom onset, close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fever or symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)</td>
<td>In the last 14 days, close contact with an ill laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient.</td>
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The criteria are intended to serve as guidance for evaluation. Patients should be evaluated and discussed with public health departments on a case-by-case basis if their clinical presentation or exposure history is equivocal (e.g., uncertain travel or exposure).

Recommendations for Reporting, Testing, and Specimen Collection
Healthcare providers should immediately notify both infection control personnel at their healthcare facility and their local or state health department in the event of a PUI for 2019-nCoV. State health departments that have identified a PUI should immediately contact CDC’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 770-488-7100 and complete a 2019-nCoV PUI case investigation form available below. Download form.

Footnotes
1 Fever may not be present in some patients, such as those who are very young, elderly, immunosuppressed, or taking certain fever-lowering medications. Clinical judgment should be used to guide testing of patients in such situations.
2 Close contact is defined as—
   a) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters), or within the room or care area, of a novel coronavirus case for a prolonged period of time while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment or PPE (e.g., gowns, gloves, NIOSH-certified disposable N95 respirator, eye protection); close contact can include caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a health care waiting area or room with a novel coronavirus case.— or –
   b) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a novel coronavirus case (e.g., being coughed on) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.

Healthcare Personnel Preparedness Checklist for 2019-nCoV

Front-line healthcare personnel in the United States should be prepared to evaluate patients for 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). The following checklist highlights key steps for healthcare personnel in preparation for transport and arrival of patients potentially infected with 2019-nCoV.

- Review your infection prevention and control policies and CDC infection control recommendations for 2019-nCoV (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/infection-control.html) for:
  - Assessment and triage of patients with acute respiratory symptoms
  - Patient placement
  - Implementation of Standard, Contact, and Airborne Precautions, including the use of eye protection
  - Visitor management and exclusion
  - Source control measures for patients (e.g., put facemask on suspect patients)
  - Requirements for performing aerosol generating procedures
- Be alert for patients who meet the persons under investigation (PUI) (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html) definition
- Know how to report a potential 2019-nCoV case or exposure to facility infection control leads and public health officials
- Know who, when, and how to seek evaluation by occupational health following an unprotected exposure (i.e., not wearing recommended PPE) to a suspected or confirmed nCoV patient
- Remain at home, and notify occupational health services, if you are ill
- Know how to contact and receive information from your state or local public health agency

This information is also available online at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/hcp-personnel-checklist.html