Health Services: Novel Coronavirus in Wuhan, China

What is the Novel Coronavirus in Wuhan, China?
There have been recent reports of a new (novel) strain of a coronavirus which is causing an outbreak of severe pneumonia illness in the city of Wuhan, Hubel Province, China, throughout China and throughout the world. This outbreak began in early December, 2019 and continues to expand in scope and magnitude. There have been thousands of new cases in China and clear evidence of human-to-human transmission in several countries including the United States. The World Health Organization declared on Thursday, January 30 that this has now become a global health emergency as the outbreak has spread well beyond China. Global surveillance is being done and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is closely monitoring this situation.

How is this virus spread?
This Novel Coronavirus is similar to other viruses such as MERS and SARs, all of which have their origin in bats. The sequence of the illness suggests that this recent virus is spread through an animal reservoir. Early on many of the patients in the outbreak had a link to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. Later, a growing number of patients have reported the same illness but did not have exposure to animal markets confirming a person-to-person spread in the community.

What are the symptoms of the virus?
The symptoms include:
Fever AND symptoms of lower respiratory illness (cough, shortness of breath) AND in the last 14 days before symptom onset history of travel from Wuhan City, China

OR
Close contact with a person who is under surveillance for the virus or close contact with a person who has a confirmed case.

If you are a student, staff or faculty who has recently been to China or who has possibly come in contact with an infected individual AND you exhibit the symptoms, please go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department.

Prevention

New Jersey’s Public Liberal Arts College
The best prevention for any communicable disease are simple but important measures to practice as part of your daily routine:

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soap and water,
- Avoid sharing anything that has come into contact with saliva,
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw the tissue away and do not reuse it!
- Get adequate sleep and eat a well-balanced diet to ensure a healthy immune system.

**Situation in the U.S.A.**

The CDC is continually and carefully monitoring the situation. Currently there have been several people with imported cases in the United States. There was one case noted of a person-to-person spread with this virus in the United States. While this is a serious health threat, for the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus, the immediate health risk is considered low.

Health Services and Administration throughout the College will continue to work closely with the New Jersey Department of Health to prepare for, screen and prevent the spread of illness and to keep our community safe. If the situation warrants, we will follow up with additional information.