

February 4, 2020



Ezras Nashim Statement on the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Recent news about the outbreak of a novel (new) coronavirus (named 2019-nCoV) originating in Wuhan, China has many people concerned. For the general American public, the immediate health risk from the coronavirus is considered low. However, members of the Orthodox Jewish community travel often (including business trips to China) and congregate regularly for prayer services and celebratory occasions, so illnesses can spread quickly within our community if we do not exercise necessary precautions.

For the General Public

There is no vaccination to protect against human coronavirus infection; however, you may be able to reduce your risk of infection by doing the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Additionally, on January 27, 2020 the CDC issued updated travel guidance for China, recommending that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to all of the country.

If you are sick, you can help protect others by doing the following:

- Stay home while you are sick.
- Avoid close contact with others.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.

For EMS and Healthcare Personnel

EMS and other healthcare personnel may come into contact with potential coronavirus patients. The CDC is advising healthcare providers to obtain a detailed travel history for patients with coronavirus symptoms (e.g. runny nose, headache, cough, sore throat, fever, a general feeling of being unwell). If a patient traveled to Wuhan, China on or after December 1, 2019, and became

sick within 2 weeks of leaving, medical providers should consider the coronavirus outbreak and notify infection control personnel and the local health department immediately.

Although it is not yet clear how the illness is transmitted, the CDC recommends a cautious approach when treating patients with coronavirus symptoms. Such patients should wear a surgical mask, and, when possible, their evaluation should be conducted in a private room with the door closed. Personnel entering the room should use standard precautions, contact precautions, and airborne precautions, and use eye protection (goggles or a face shield). They should also exercise caution with aerosol generating procedures.

The receiving hospital should be notified of potential infection as soon as possible so that the emergency department can make the necessary preparations.

Once medical personnel are done treating or transporting the patient, they should properly doff and dispose of personal protective equipment (PPE), clean and disinfect with EPA registered disinfectants with known effectiveness against human coronaviruses, and follow proper procedures for disposing of biohazardous waste.

All Ezras Nashim member equipment bags have a Hi-Risk Kit containing PPE that is appropriate for use with suspected coronavirus patients.

The New York State Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Systems released an updated Policy Statement on 2019-nCoV “Wuhan Coronavirus” on January 30, 2020. This statement contains detailed guidance for EMS personnel and can be found here: <https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/pdf/20-02.pdf>

General Health Precautions

The CDC is reminding the public that in addition to the coronavirus outbreak it is also flu and respiratory disease season. They are encouraging everyone to get the flu vaccination, take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs, and take flu antivirals if prescribed.

Please note: This is a rapidly evolving situation. The recommendations above may change as more is learned about this coronavirus.

For more information and updates about the coronavirus, please visit the CDC here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

Ezras Nashim, BLS First Response Agency

By: Dr. Allen W. Cherson, DO, MHA, CPHQ, CHCQM, FACEP - Medical Director

Hon. Rachel E. Freier, AEMT-Paramedic – Executive Director

<http://www.ezrasnashim.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/ezrasnashim/>

<https://www.instagram.com/ezrasnashim/>