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## Coronavirus: COVID-19



HOTLINE: 8002 8080

Current situation (05.03.2020):  
2 infected people, 22 people placed in quarantine

## WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS?

### Definition of Coronavirus

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause symptoms ranging from the common cold to more serious illnesses such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). A new coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not yet been identified in humans.

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the latest discovered coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

COVID-19 infection remains mild in 80% of cases. In order to avoid spreading among the general population and to protect vulnerable and fragile populations, it is important to take a certain number of precautions.

## Where did the new coronavirus appear?

SARS-CoV-2 is a new strain of coronavirus that had not been seen in humans before. The epidemic began in the Chinese city of Wuhan, capital of the Hubei province. At first, the epidemic seemed to be linked to the South China Seafood City market. This market welcomes traders in seafood, poultry, bats, marmots and other wild animals, which indicates a probable animal origin of this virus. Later, spread between humans has also been identified. Cases have since been discovered in other regions of China and in other countries, often linked to a history of travel to Wuhan. The health authorities of the various affected countries are currently investigating the coronavirus and the sources of the contamination.

## What is a pandemic?

There is no universally applicable definition. However, it can be said that a pandemic is the increased and sustained propagation of an extraordinary human disease that rapidly affects all parts of the world and a large part of the global population.

## SYMPTOMS

### What are the symptoms?

Symptoms vary from moderate to severe respiratory disease, accompanied by fever, cough and difficulty of breathing. Seniors and people with pre-existing chronic illnesses seem more vulnerable and susceptible to complications.

The incubation period, time between contamination and the appearance of the first symptoms of COVID-19 infection is maximum 14 days.

### If I am sick after having been in contact with a person (teacher, trainer, class colleague, etc.) who returned from a risk zone and is also ill, what should I do?

If that person has COVID-19, all persons who have been in close contact with that person shall be sought after and identified by the Health Inspection. You will therefore be contacted by a Health Inspection officer who will give further instructions to follow. If this person is not infected with COVID-19, there is no need for specific measures (besides following the recommendations of your physician).

### Can a blood test detect the presence of the virus?

No. Only a test on respiratory secretions is currently available to detect the presence of the new coronavirus.

### Can my personal physician prescribe a laboratory test to identify the SARS-CoV-2-virus?

Currently, the test is only executed on persons suspected to be infected with COVID-19, in accordance with the recommendations issued by the Health Inspection and the National Service for Infectious Diseases. In certain specific cases, a hospital doctor may ask for the test to be carried out on a pneumonia patient. All these tests are realized by the LNS and paid for by a specific budget of the government.

### If there is a suspicion that I am infected with COVID-19 and a test was executed, who receives the test results?

The result of the test shall be transmitted, by means of a secure transmission, to the Health Inspection or the hospital service, which requested the test, and who communicates it to the patient without delay. At the patient's request, the result can also be passed on to his/her physician.

## TRANSMISSION AND TREATMENT

## How is COVID-19 coronavirus spread?

The COVID-19 infection is transmitted by people carrying the virus. The disease can be spread from person to person through respiratory droplets expelled from the nose or mouth when a person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can persist for some time on objects or surfaces around the person in question. An infection with COVID-19 can occur if you touch these objects or surfaces and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth. COVID-19 can also be contracted by inhaling droplets from a sick person who has just coughed or sneezed. This is why it is important to keep a distance of more than two meters from a sick person and to respect basic hygiene measures.

## Can I be contaminated by a package from a risk zone?

Coronaviruses spread through secretions from humans and animals. According to the WHO, a contamination by a package from a risk zone is not likely.

## Is COVID-19 transmissible during sexual intercourse?

COVID-19 is not a sexually transmitted disease. However, the virus being present in the respiratory secretions and being able to be transmitted by direct contact of person to person, sexual intercourse is favorable to a transmission of the virus, if one of the partners is infected.

## Is there a vaccine against COVID-19?

At this stage, there is no vaccine yet. Research is ongoing.

## What treatment exists for COVID-19 infection?

There is no specific treatment at this time, although research is ongoing. The treatment is therefore mainly symptomatic, i.e. it is similar to the treatment for a cough, respiratory problems or high temperature.

## Can my physician refuse to receive me if I return from a risk zone?

Your physician is obliged to refer you towards the best possible care. If, after analysing your symptoms and risk factors, your doctor considers it appropriate to carry out a more in-depth assessment of your risk of COVID-19, it is his duty to refer you to the health services. If, at the end of this evaluation, the experts consider that your personal risk of COVID-19 does not justify any specific measures, your physician will be able to receive and care for you.

## PROTECTION

### What should I do to protect myself and to avoid being contaminated?

The same precautions should be taken as for any other respiratory infection.

- 1.** Most importantly: wash your hands regularly and properly. The best way to wash your hands is illustrated online at [www.sante.lu](http://www.sante.lu)
- 2.** Do you cough or sneeze? Do it in a tissue or in the crease of the elbow. Throw the tissue in a bin with a lid.
- 3.** Avoid shaking hands or kissing.
- 4.** Avoid close contact with sick people (keep a distance of at least 2 meters).
- 5.** Stay home if you are sick. Don't go to work!
- 6.** Avoid touching your face with your hands as much as possible.

## I am a vulnerable person, what should I do?

Like the flu, the coronavirus is especially dangerous for the elderly and people with other (serious) health conditions. Protect yourself from coronavirus like you do for the flu. Follow the 6 instructions listed above and avoid poorly ventilated areas with many people.

At this point, it appears that children are generally less severely affected.

## For immuno-depressed people, is the wearing of a mask recommended to protect against the a coronavirus infection?

No. These people are not subject to special precautions under COVID-19. Only people who have an immunodeficiency or who are taking treatment that weakens their immune defenses, and for whom the attending physician has already prescribed specific protective measures (such as wearing a mask in a hospital) should continue to follow these prescriptions.

## When to wear a mask?

Wearing a mask in a preventive manner is not recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a means to avoid contamination with the COVID-19 virus.

The use of special masks (FFP2) to prevent infection with coronavirus only makes sense in hospitals where patients infected with coronavirus are treated and in laboratories for the analysis of the body material of these patients.

## What does quarantine mean?

Quarantine is a measure of confinement of a person in good health but having had proven close contact with a sick and contagious person. This measure aims to contain further spreading of the virus and at protecting public health. It is no longer adequate, once the virus has spread generally among the population at large. This measure to protect public health is a decision of the Health Inspectorate and its duration depends on the maximum incubation period of the disease (coronavirus: 14 days). Quarantine is accomplished either at home or in a quarantine center. A person cannot move freely during quarantine.

The person in question benefits from an absence of work certificate, equivalent to a sickness certificate, issued up by the Health Inspectorate and recognized by the health insurance. Certificates issued by health authorities of other European countries for quarantine measure are also recognized in Luxembourg

## What does isolation mean?

Isolation is a measure of confinement of a sick and contagious person, based on a decision of the physician in charge of the patient's care. If necessary, isolation may be imposed by the Health Inspectorate if, for example, the patient refuses isolation or its therapeutic treatment. The duration of isolation depends on the duration of contagiousness of the disease.

Isolation is usually done in a hospital, but can also be realized at home. For the duration of the illness, the patient benefits from a sick leave equivalent to a sickness certificate issued by the attending physician.

## Can the school administration (or the employer) ask to see a negative coronavirus test before admitting the pupil (or the employee) to attend classes again (the workplace)?

No. First, coronavirus testing is not recommended for someone without COVID-19 symptoms. Further, a test can be negative during the incubation period of the disease, while the person is infected. A negative test could thus be a "false negative" and give a wrong insurance to the person and its surroundings. Finally, the result of the test is covered by medical confidentiality. The test is not public information for the employer or the school. The decision on sharing medical information with others lies in the hands of the patient.

## Should children, who show signs of an acute respiratory infection, be restricted to

access schools / maison relais / nurseries, in order to limit the risk of transmission of the new coronavirus?

A child who is ill should not attend the nursery /school or maison relais, regardless the risk of transmission of COVID-19. The same precautions apply throughout the flu season: Stay at home!

## HOW IS LUXEMBOURG PREPARING?

### A preparation at various levels

An inter-ministerial coordination group continuously plans and prepares the measures to be taken in the event of a COVID-19 infection in order to prevent or contain the spread.

Health authorities have developed procedures to take in charge suspected cases of infection and to follow up with their contacts. These procedures have been communicated to all physicians on several occasions.

The National Health Laboratory (LNS) is approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the diagnosis of the virus. The national service for infectious diseases at the Centre Hospitalier de Luxembourg (CHL) is prepared to receive possible cases of suspected or confirmed illness.

The procedures for quarantine and self-monitoring of contacts have been defined by the Health Directorate and can be implemented quickly by the Health Inspectorate (Inspection sanitaire).

Luxembourg has a stock of special masks (FFP2) and surgical masks. These masks are intended for caregivers in close contact with a sick person or a person in quarantine. Further, Luxembourg is participating in a joint acquisition with other EU member states aiming to strengthen the existing stock.

An inter-ministerial coordination group continuously plans and prepares the measures to be taken in the event of a COVID-19 infection.

### What is the role of the Health Inspectorate (Inspection sanitaire)?

The Health Inspectorate is a division of the Health Directorate. The mission is:

- › to ensure the protection of public health, both in terms of environmental health and the surveillance and control of communicable diseases,
- › to organize medical checkups for third-country nationals,
- › to process documents from foreigners seeking treatment in Luxembourg and whose care is not provided by social security organizations,
- › to decide on the medical fitness for deportation measures.

### Why is there no screening at Luxembourg Airport?

The World Health Organization (WHO) does not advocate additional measures for airports. In aviation, very strict procedures still apply. If the crew notices a passenger on board who is showing symptoms, this is reported to the airport before the plane even lands, and a medical team is ready at the airport to take care of the passenger in question. Other passengers will be taken care of according to the degree of exposure upon arrival of the Health Inspectorate.

### Are our hospitals and health services prepared to accommodate many patients?

Yes, our hospitals are prepared. A referral service, namely the National Service of Infectious Diseases at CHL, is in charge of the reception of patients infected with the coronavirus.

I am the organizer of an event or demonstration that will bring together many people, and potentially people from high-risk exposure areas. Should I maintain this event?

Currently, there is no prohibition or restriction on gatherings for events or demonstrations on Luxembourg territory. The organizer is responsible for the safety of participants in the events and demonstrations he organizes. The Health Department proposes [a risk assessment](#).

## Does the government recommend restricting certain commercial activities or visits due to the health situation linked to the new coronavirus?

No. The government has not issued any directives on this matter. Commercial activities, visits and tourism can be continued. Only quarantine measures established by the Directorate of Health for people who have had close contact with one or more cases of COVID-19 constitute a limitation to trade and tourism activities.

## TRAVEL INFO

### Which areas are currently declared at risk?

Risk exposure areas are defined as areas or regions for which diffuse community transmission of SARS-CoV-2 has been described and where the virus circulates among the population. Current regions are:

Continent	Country
Asia	China (mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao), Singapore, Japan, South Korea
Middle East	Iran
Europe	Italy: Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia Romagna and Piemont

Source: ECDC <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/areas-presumed-community-transmission-2019-ncov>

The list of regions and countries stems from the WHO and the ECDC, which are in charge of updating it on the basis of verified information transmitted to them by the different health authorities of the countries and regions.

### Can I travel to a risk zone?

Avoid as far as possible a trip to a risk zone, namely a destination where the epidemic is raging.

If, however, you are traveling to a risk area, observe both the local instructions and the following recommendations:

1. Avoid contact with sick people, especially those who cough.
2. Avoid markets and places where animals are handled, live or dead.
3. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based disinfectant solution.
4. Avoid contact with animals, their secretions or feces.

Your travel plans may be thwarted as some areas are closed to the public or quarantined.

### I have been in a risk area in the past 14 days and have the following symptoms: fever, cough, breathing problems. What should I do?

If you have these symptoms and you have been in a risk zone, or if someone close to you is sick and has gone to one of these zones, call the **Hotline 8002 8080** and mention your travel history and your symptoms.

Do not go to a physician's office or to the emergency room. To avoid contamination of other people, it is recommended to stay away from these people. Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you sneeze or cough. Throw the tissues in a bin with a lid and wash your hands frequently and properly.

### I have symptoms (cough, fever, breathing problems), but I have not been in a risk zone

in the past 14 days. What should I do:

If you have not been in close contact with a sick person who has recently been in a risk area, you should not worry. You may have a seasonal flu. In this case, consult your general practitioner.

If you return from a risk zone without showing symptoms, but you have been potentially in casual contact with infected people, do the following for the next 14 days upon your return:

- › Monitor symptoms daily (cough, breathing problems)
- › Measure your temperature twice a day
- › Wash your hands frequently and properly
- › Avoid contact with vulnerable and fragile people
- › Continue your usual activity

I was in close contact with infected people, even without showing symptoms. What should I do in the 14 days following the contact?

- › Stay at home and avoid contact with other people
- › Call the **Hotline 8002 8080**
- › Stay within reach for the Health Inspectorate

You are considered to have been in close contact:

- › If you shared the same living area as the sick patient when the latter presented symptoms
- › If you have had direct, face-to-face contact, within two meters of the patient while coughing, sneezing, or talking
- › With your flirts and intimate people
- › With your class or office neighbors
- › If you are a neighbor of the sick patient on an airplane or train, or if you have stayed in a confined space with him (e.g. private car)

Can children and teenagers, returning from a risk zone go to school or day care?

In line with international recommendations, children and young people who return from a risk zone, without having had proven close contact with a sick and contagious person and without presenting typical symptoms (cough, fever, respiratory problems) can directly return to school or day care.

If a child or teenager shows symptoms within 14 days after his return, or has been proven to be in close contact with a sick and contagious person, his parents must keep him at home, contact the Health Inspectorate, mention the symptoms and travel history. The physician of the Health Inspectorate will assess the situation and take the necessary precautions. Do not go to your physician or the emergency room.

Can adults returning from a risk zone resume their professional activity?

If these people have not been proven to be in close contact with a sick and contagious person and do not have typical symptoms (cough, fever, breathing problems), they can resume their professional activity.

Can my employer force me to stay at home after my return from a risk zone and in the absence of symptoms?

An employer can certainly ask an employee to stay at home.

In this case, the resulting absence is qualified as a work exemption and cannot be counted against recreational leave. It is recommended that you request the employer to communicate the absence of leave in writing.

For all other questions related to COVID-2019, please consult the websites of the Ministry of Health [www.sante.lu/coronavirus](http://www.sante.lu/coronavirus), the European

## Poster - Information and Guidelines

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### CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

#### HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF?



Wash your hands regularly and properly with water and soap.



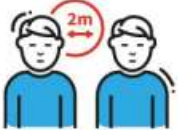
Cough or sneeze into the crease of the elbow or in a tissue.



Avoid shaking hands or kissing.



Avoid touching your face with your hands.



Avoid close contact with sick people.



Stay home if you are sick. Don't go to work or school.

#### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?



Symptoms resemble those of the flu. The infection remains mild for the majority of cases.

#### HOW DOES THE VIRUS SPREAD?



A normal mask does not protect against contamination.



The virus is spread via respiratory droplets expelled when a person coughs or sneezes.

FOR INFORMATION:  
8002 - 8080

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:  
112

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# CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

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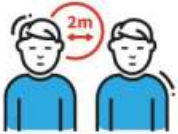
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DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG  
Ministère de la Santé

Directorat de la santé

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## For more information

### Publications

- › Flyer Coronavirus - Information and guidelines (Pdf - 2.01 Mb)
- › Poster Coronavirus - Information and guidelines (landscape) (Pdf - 1.56 Mb)
- › Travellers' advice (03.03.2020) - French - (Pdf - 1.03 Mb)

### News

- › COVID-19: la Coopération luxembourgeoise octroie 400.000 euros pour la lutte contre le virus
- › Rapatriement au Luxembourg de deux ressortissants depuis Wuhan
- › Mise sous quarantaine par les autorités sanitaires espagnoles d'un hôtel sur l'île de Ténériffe suite à la découverte d'un touriste italien infecté par le virus du COVID-19
- › Présence de quatre ressortissants luxembourgeois à l'hôtel H10 Costa Adeje Palace à Ténériffe
- › Situation du COVID-19 en Italie

### Further information

- › Portail santé
- › Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies (ECDC)
- › Organisation mondiale de la Santé (OMS)
- › EU Commission information on coronavirus

### Related procedures

- › Risk assessment of mass gatherings in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic (Pdf - 85 Kb)
- › Online Questionnaire

### Other

› [Coping with stress](#) (Pdf - 55 Kb)

## Organisation(s)

- › [Health directorate](#)
- › [High Commission for National Protection](#)
- › [Ministry of Health](#)
- › [Ministry of Labour, Employment and the Social and Solidarity Economy](#)

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