

Daily coronavirus update



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Daily updates will be posted every afternoon

March 9

The eight guests in the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus continue to be engaged in daily virtual town halls.

Of the seven Americans from the Diamond Princess cruise ship, one could be cleared to leave today, pending test results.

Two individuals continue to be treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit. One is in critical condition, and the other is in good condition.

As the community focuses on containment of COVID-19, residents are reminded to frequently wash hands for at least 20 seconds, to avoid large crowds, and to make family and business plans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers [these recommendations](#).

In the U.S., cases have reached about 570, with 22 deaths. Worldwide, cases stand at nearly 111,400, with nearly 3,900 deaths.

March 8

A third individual has enrolled in UNMC's clinical trial.

Two individuals continue to be treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit, one in critical condition and one in good condition.

Eight guests remain in the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus, including seven remaining from the group evacuated to Omaha from the Diamond Princess Cruise ship.

Cases in the U.S. stand at about 440, with 19 deaths. Worldwide, cases stand at about 107,500, with more than 3,600 deaths.

March 7

The 36-year-old woman transferred Friday evening to the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit continues to be

treated there and is in critical condition.

Because of interactions between community health care workers and the patient in the days prior to her admission to the Biocontainment Unit, a number of people were told to self-quarantine in their homes. One health care worker was unable to do this because of living arrangements and was placed at the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus. This individual will be monitored there until public health officials determine it is safe for this person to return to home and work.

Of the eight remaining Americans evacuated to Omaha from the Diamond Princess Cruise ship, one continues to be treated in the Biocontainment Unit and is stable. Testing protocol continues for the seven in the quarantine unit, and one could be cleared to leave this weekend, pending test results.

Cases in the U.S. stand at about 350, with 17 deaths. Worldwide, cases stand at about 102,500, with nearly 3,500 deaths.

March 6, 6:00 p.m.

A 36-year-old woman who traveled to the United Kingdom has been diagnosed with the coronavirus and is now in isolation inside the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit at the Nebraska Medical Center. This person was originally being treated at Methodist Hospital in Omaha when test results showed she was positive for COVID-19. This is the first person in the state of Nebraska to test positive for the novel coronavirus who wasn't a passenger on the Diamond Princess cruise ship. This case is not related to the individuals being isolated at the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center Campus and is not considered a community case because of the individual's travel history.

The number of guests on the UNMC/ Nebraska Medical Center campus from the Diamond Princess cruise ship remains at eight. One continues to be treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit, and seven are being monitored in the National Quarantine Center. The earliest that another person could be cleared to leave the quarantine unit is over the weekend, pending test results.

The presence of one case in our community suggests the possibility there are others that are yet to be diagnosed. For that reason, we want to make these suggestions:

- Practice good hand hygiene, including frequent and thorough hand washing and proper use of hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your face, including your eyes nose and mouth
- Make sure you have all needed medications and supplies on hand, as if you were preparing for a severe snowstorm

COVID-19 cases in the U.S. reached 260, with 14 deaths. Globally, cases reached nearly 102,000, with 3,460 deaths.

March 6, 4:15 p.m.

The number of guests on the UNMC/ Nebraska Medical Center campus from the Diamond Princess cruise ship remains at eight. One continues to be treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit, and seven are being monitored in the National Quarantine Center. The earliest that another person could be cleared to leave the quarantine unit is over the weekend, pending test results.

COVID-19 cases in the U.S. reached 240, with 14 deaths. Globally, cases have surpassed 100,000, with more than 3,400 deaths.

March 5

Eight of the original 15 Americans from the Diamond Princess cruise ship remain on the UNMC/ Nebraska Medical Center campus. One guest – cleared yesterday – left the National Quarantine Unit this morning. One person continues to be treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit, and seven are being monitored in the quarantine unit.

COVID-19 cases in the U.S. stand at more than 160, with 11 deaths. Globally, cases have reached nearly 97,000 and more than 3,300 deaths.

As cases continue to increase in the U.S., it is important for everyone to create their family plan and for health care facilities to update pandemic plans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers [these recommendations](#).

A second participant has enrolled in the UNMC clinical trial of an experimental treatment for COVID-19. The trial at UNMC is led by Andre Kalil, MD, and is sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health.

March 4

Today, one guest left the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus, and another was cleared to leave. This leaves eight of the original 15 Americans from the Diamond Princess cruise ship. Seven of those are in the National Quarantine Unit, and one is being treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit

The testing regimen continues, with the possibility of more departures this week.

As preparation continues for the possible spread of the virus in Nebraska, it is advisable to review business continuity plans and consider what measures will be necessary if a large portion of staff must stay home from work. Families should make plans for the possible closing of schools and day cares. Tips are available at [CDC.gov](#).

In the United States, 11 people have died of COVID-19, all connected to a nursing home in Washington state, and total U.S. cases have reached 148. International case count of COVID-19 stands at more than 94,000 cases worldwide and more than 3,200 deaths.

March 3

Ten Americans remain on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus from the Diamond Princess cruise ship. One is being treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit, and nine remain in the National Quarantine Unit. One guest left the quarantine unit today.

The testing regimen continues for the 10 remaining guests, with the possibility of more departures later this week.

Nebraskans should prepare for the spread of COVID-19. Maintain a few weeks supply of food, medication and other necessary items in case it's necessary to stay home for a short period of time.

Important practices to continue include good hand washing, cover your cough/sneeze, and stay home if you are ill.

Six people have died in the U.S. of COVID-19, all in Washington state, and total U.S. cases have reached 106. International case count of COVID-19 stands at more than 92,300 cases worldwide and more than 3,100 deaths.

March 2

Four people being monitored in the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus have left quarantine after exceeding the qualifications to be eligible for release. Two of these individuals previously tested positive for COVID-19, while two others have tested negative throughout the quarantine process. Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts and UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., greeted two of the people as they left the quarantine unit Monday morning.

Testing protocol continues for the 11 guests remaining in the quarantine unit, with the possibility that a few more guests might meet requirements for leaving the quarantine unit later this week.

Globally, cases continue to increase and have reached more than 89,000 in about 70 countries, with more than 3,000 deaths. The majority of new cases have been reported from South Korea, Iran and Italy. The U.S. has 86 confirmed cases so far, with two deaths reported in the Seattle area.

March 1

Departure from the National Quarantine Unit (NQU) is being finalized for a few of the 15 Americans from the Diamond Princess Cruise Ship.

The guests were served a steak dinner Saturday evening, courtesy of Omaha Steaks. Spirits remain high among the guests. Daily virtual town hall meetings for the guests continue with discussion of resilience and coping methods.

Infectious disease experts provided information and training tools for personal protective equipment (PPE) for COVID-19 recently through a large webinar with regional partners in several states.

One person has died in the U.S. of COVID-19, and total U.S. cases reached 72. Officials in Washington State identified a possible COVID-19 outbreak in a nursing home, with two confirmed cases and others under investigation. International case count of COVID-19 stands at more than 87,400 cases worldwide and nearly 3,000 deaths.

February 29

Plans are being finalized for a few of the 15 Americans from the Diamond Princess cruise ship to leave the National Quarantine Center (NQU) early in the week. Those plans are pending final test results.

The guests in the NQU continue to do well, though they have seen the forecast today and said they wish they could be outside in the Nebraska sunshine.

International case count of COVID-19 continues to climb, especially in South Korea and Italy, with a total of more than 85,600 cases worldwide and more than 2,900 deaths. There are now 66 cases in the U.S., including new cases in Washington and Oregon.

February 28

Virtual town halls continue daily for the 15 people from the Diamond Princess cruise ship here for coronavirus monitoring. Their requests are being met, and spirits remain high. Many questions have been related to retesting and departure.

Testing has begun, and preliminary plans are underway for possible departure March 2 for a few members of the group.

Internationally, there are more than 83,000 cases in more than 50 countries, and 2,867 people have died. In the U.S., there have been no deaths and 60 confirmed cases, including 33 cases in California. In California, 8,400 people are being monitored.

February 27

The 15 people from the Diamond Princess cruise ship here for coronavirus monitoring are doing well, and discussions about a timetable for testing and departure are now in the earliest stages. We are working with the CDC to get information about the testing done on our guests in Japan so we can set a more accurate schedule for testing and departure.

Our 15 guests are all now being monitored in the National Quarantine Unit, meaning the [Nebraska Biocontainment Unit](#) is no longer active. The Nebraska Biocontainment Unit is used for a higher level of medical care, while the National Quarantine Unit is used primarily for monitoring.

Our daily town hall meetings, which include the people being monitored and our providers, continue to be successful. We're addressing any needs that arise from that briefing. We are also providing hard copy daily briefings when dinner is delivered.

February 26

UNMC/Nebraska Medicine is now monitoring 15 Americans for the coronavirus who were passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship. Thirteen of these people are positive for the coronavirus while two are negative. Two of the individuals who had been receiving care in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit have now been transferred to the National Quarantine Unit because of their improving condition. Everyone we're monitoring is now in the 20-bed National Quarantine Unit and the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit is now unoccupied.

Our first town hall with those being monitored was a huge success with lots of great questions being asked and then answered by our staff.

Those who have tested negative and remain healthy will likely be released from quarantine March 2.



UNMC/Nebraska Medicine staff members – including nurses, doctors and behavioral health specialists – hold a virtual town hall to meet with the quarantined individuals. The group discussed possible ways to improve the quarantine experience, including increasing communication

among those
being monitored
so they can
support each
other through
the experience.
Federal partners
with ASPR also
took part in the
call.

February 25, 5:37 p.m.

For the second time this week, an American who was evacuated to the United States from the Diamond Princess cruise ship is being transferred to UNMC/Nebraska Medicine for monitoring for the coronavirus. This person has tested positive for the disease but was originally being monitored in California at Travis Air Force Base.

This individual is the spouse of one of the 13 people who arrived in Omaha for monitoring and treatment February 17. This person will be taken directly to the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus.

This will be the last time spouses from the Diamond Princess cruise ship will be reunited at UNMC/Nebraska Medicine. One person here still has a spouse elsewhere, but that person has tested negative for the disease, and those who are negative won't be transported.

February 25, 12:00 p.m.

We now have 14 people being monitored for COVID-19 at UNMC/Nebraska Medicine with the arrival of an additional Diamond Princess evacuee yesterday evening. Twelve people are being monitored in the National Quarantine Unit while two continue receiving care in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit. Twelve of the evacuees have tested positive for the coronavirus while two continue to be negative. Those who are negative and remain healthy are eligible to leave quarantine on March 2. Details for testing and release of those who tested positive are still being discussed.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced the launch of a clinical trial to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of an antiviral to help treat people hospitalized with a COVID-19 infection. This is the first clinical trial in the United States to evaluate an experimental treatment for this disease. Remdesivir is an investigational broad-spectrum antiviral treatment. It was previously tested in humans with Ebola and has shown promise in animal models for treating MERS and SARS, which are caused by other coronaviruses. [Learn more our involvement in this clinical trial.](#)

Our 14 evacuees will have the opportunity to speak to each other via a virtual teleconference today, where early plans for testing and tentative timelines for dismissal may be discussed.

There are now 53 cases of COVID-19 in the United States. There are more than 80,000 cases worldwide. Outside of China, hotspots continue to be South Korea and Italy.

February 24, 4:15 p.m.

An additional American who was evacuated to the United States from the Diamond Princess cruise ship is being transferred to UNMC/Nebraska Medicine for monitoring for the coronavirus. This person has tested positive for the disease but was originally being monitored in Texas at Lackland Air Force Base.

This individual is the spouse of one of the 13 people who arrived in Omaha for monitoring and treatment February 17. This person will be taken directly to the National Quarantine Unit on the UNMC/Nebraska Medical Center campus.

Scheduled arrival of this individual is 6:00 p.m. CST at Omaha's Eppley Airfield. The landing will be handled in similar fashion to previous arrivals, with the plane remaining in an isolated area of Eppley tarmac, with no involvement with the main passenger terminal.

The addition of this person to the group being monitored at UNMC/Nebraska Medicine brings the total here to 14. Twelve people are being monitored in the National Quarantine Unit, while two are receiving care in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit. Those numbers reflect one person returning earlier today to the National Quarantine Unit after treatment in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit. Currently 12 people have tested positive for COVID-19 while two remain negative. Those who are negative could leave quarantine March 2.

February 24, 12:00 p.m.

As of 12:00 p.m. CST, UNMC/Nebraska Medicine continues to monitor 13 people evacuated from the Diamond Princess cruise ship for the coronavirus.

One person who previously was being treated in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit has been transferred back to the National Quarantine unit, bringing our totals to 11 people in the National Quarantine Unit and two in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit.

Currently 11 people have tested positive for COVID-19 while two remain negative. Those who are negative could leave quarantine March 2.

Today we are launching an internal virtual town hall so our evacuees can communicate with each other and share thoughts about this operation. We continue to attend to their personal needs as do our behavioral health experts from ASPR who are on site to help in that regard.

Nationally, there are still 35 cases of COVID-19 nationwide. Internationally, the biggest spikes in number of cases are in South Korea and Italy. In Italy, public events are being canceled in order to limit the spread there.

February 23

UNMC/Nebraska Medicine continues to monitor 13 people evacuated from the Diamond Princess cruise ship. Ten of these individuals remain in the National Quarantine Unit while three are receiving care in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit. Everyone is either symptom free or clinically stable from the coronavirus.

For the two individuals who initially tested negative and remain in quarantine, we will be performing additional testing for coronavirus. If they continue to remain without symptoms and test negative, they will likely be able to leave quarantine on March 2. Repeat testing could begin in several days on those who have tested positive.

Our behavioral health experts continue to be available to these 13 people to address any issues with being in quarantine for an extended period. We're getting good reports in that regard, especially since we've received word that additional delayed luggage has now arrived. We've been responding to requests on items they may have been missing since arrival and some people have been shopping online for other things they may need.

There are still 35 COVID-19 cases in the United States.

February 22

We currently have 13 people being monitored at UNMC/Nebraska Medicine for the coronavirus. Eleven of those people have tested positive while two are negative. Ten are being monitored in the National Quarantine Unit while three are receiving care in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit. Those three are in stable condition. All of these individuals are former passengers of the Diamond Princess cruise ship.

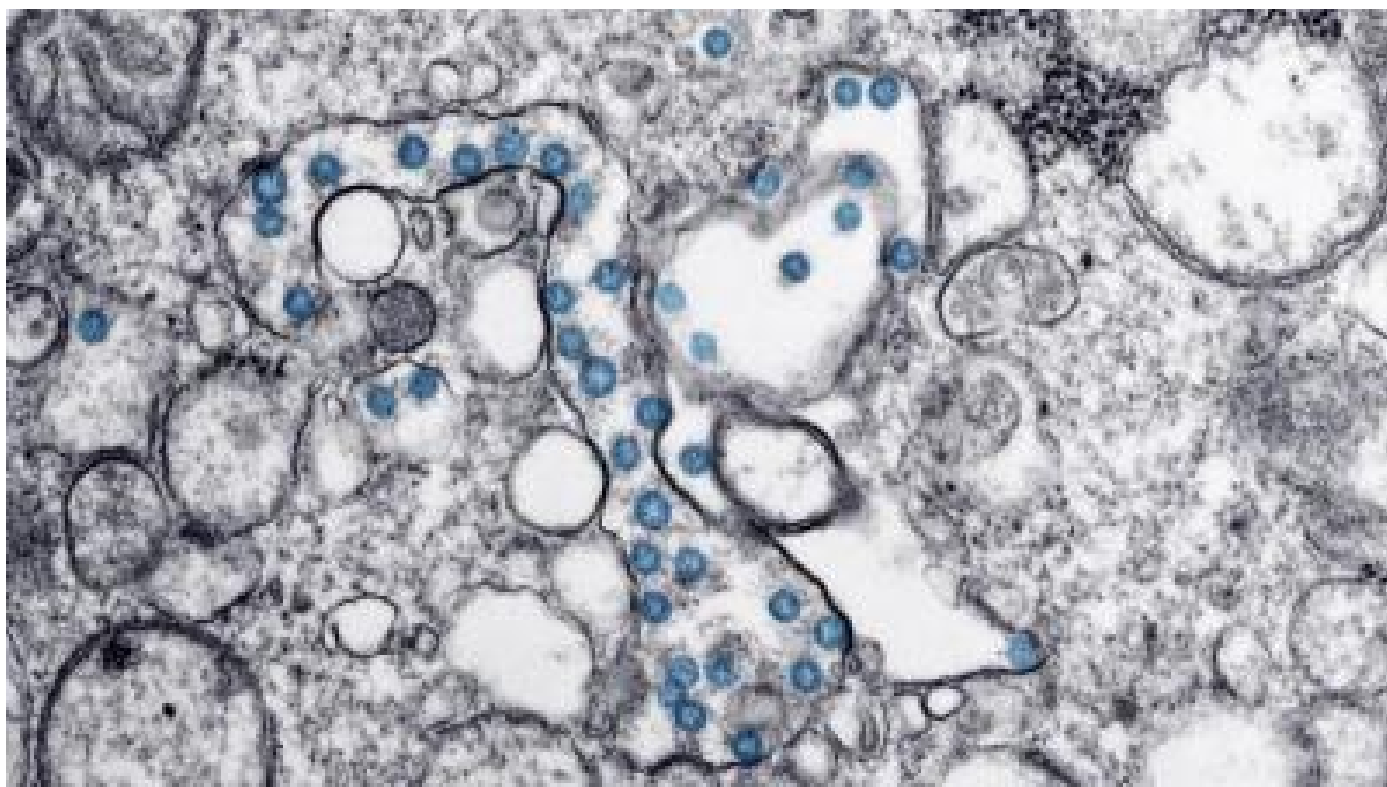
If the two people who have tested negative continue to be without symptoms, they could leave quarantine on March 2nd.

For those who are positive, two negative tests 24 hours apart are required before they can be cleared to leave quarantine. It's not certain yet when testing would begin on those who have tested positive.

Our federal partners from the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response have been extremely helpful in providing additional resources for those being monitored. Two new case management officers have arrived - they will work with David Cates, PhD, Nebraska Medicine's director of behavioral health.

The CDC has updated the number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the U.S. to 35.

Related stories:



COVID-19 Q&A: Information for the community and providers

While the novel coronavirus originated in China, it is beginning to spread to other countries, including the United States. In this blog, our infectious diseases experts answer common questions for the community and providers.

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