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DEPARTMENT OF  
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Division of Public and Behavioral Health  
*Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.*



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Chief Medical Officer

# Coronavirus and Blood Donation

## Background

The international community is experiencing an expanding outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The virus is spreading from person-to-person, and cases have been detected in several countries internationally and the United States.

As new information emerges, please remind your community, the risk of novel coronavirus is not connected with race, ethnicity or nationality. Stigma will not help to fight this illness. Sharing accurate information during a time of heightened concern is one of the best things we can do to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.

## What are coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. They usually cause mild respiratory illnesses, such as the common cold. Some coronaviruses have caused more severe illness, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that had not been seen in humans before December 2019.

## How does the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infection spread?

Experts believe the COVID-19 primarily spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Droplets from a cough or sneeze can travel approximately six feet. Another person can become infected if these droplets enter their mouth, nose, or eyes directly or through contaminated hands. An infected person who coughs or sneezes into their hands and touches surfaces such as phones, tables, door handles, or toys can contaminate them. While some coronaviruses can be spread to others through contaminated surfaces, coronaviruses generally do not survive on surfaces for a prolonged period of time. It takes 2 to 14 days after a person gets the virus in their body to become ill.

## Should I still donate blood?

According to the Red Cross, donating blood is a safe process and people should not hesitate to give or receive blood. Right now, eligible and healthy donors are strongly urged to make an appointment to give soon. But please postpone your donation for 28 days following travel to China and its special administrative regions, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as Iran, Italy and South Korea, or if you've been diagnosed with or have had contact with anyone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. For more information, visit the [Red Cross](#).

## Where can I turn for more information?

- [The CDC's Guidance for Administrators of US Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools](#)
- [Nevada's Response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [2019 Novel Coronavirus, Wuhan, China \(CDC\)](#)

- [Red Cross](#)
- [US Food and Drug Administration](#)
- [Advancing Transfusion and Cellular Therapies Worldwide](#)
- [Vitalant](#)

## Public Health Agencies in Nevada:

- Nevada Division of Public & Behavioral Health: (775) 684-5911 (M-F 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM), (775) 400-0333 (after hours).
- In Clark County, contact the Southern Nevada Health District: (702) 759-1300 (24 hours).
- In Washoe County, contact the Washoe County Health District: (775) 328-2447 (24 hours).
- In Carson City and Douglas, and Lyon counties contact the Carson City Health and Human Services: (775) 887-2190 (24 hours).

As with any newly emerging infectious disease, knowledge evolves with time. It is difficult to know the ways the disease spreads, how effectively it spreads from person to person, and how severe the infection is. We will continue to update the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak website as more information becomes available.