January 31, 2020 University Health Services

Coronavirus Update

The CDC is NOT recommending that those in the U.S. start wearing masks, as the coronavirus is not spreading in the general community. Hoarding of masks is leading to a shortage for those who actually need them such as health care workers, those who are immunocompromised, and those who may truly have a virus.

Some perspective helps: There are 6 cases of confirmed coronavirus in the U.S. and no deaths. There are an estimated 15,000,000 to 21,000,000 flu illness in the U.S. from October 2019 to the end of January with at least 9,000 deaths. There are 58 million people in the Provence of Hubei with 200 deaths. We should be much more concerned about season flu and be heading out to get the flu vaccine rather than buying masks.

People have become more concerned as the [The World Health Organization](https://www.who.int) is now declaring that this is an international health situation. The rationale for this is twofold. This is a new type of coronavirus and it is unknown how it acts. Additionally there are concerns it will spread to counties with limited health care resources who are often already comprised in relation to scarcity of food and water.

The most prudent measures continue to be to follow basic precautionary measures that promote good health, such as:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water (20 seconds of scrubbing) or use alcohol-based hand cleaners (cover all surfaces and rub until dry).
- Cough/sneeze into a tissue. Dispose of used tissues immediately into a trash can. If you don't have a tissue, cough/sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, which accelerates the spread of infections.
- Avoid close contact with others who are sick.
- If you are sick, avoid contact with others, including parties, meetings, and events.
- Do not share glasses, eating utensils, water bottles, cigarettes/vapes/JUULs, lipstick/makeup, etc.