March 9th, 2020

Situation Update

Domestic and International Health Organizations continue to monitor the spread of the Coronavirus. The threat of infection within the United States still remains “LOW.” Persons are still being advised and directed to use proper handwashing techniques, stay home from work, school, and public places if they are sick, and avoid close contact with others that are sick. Not every person that is sick necessarily has the Coronavirus. The Common Cold and Seasonal Flu are prevalent this time of year as the weather begins to change.

Citizens are also advised to choose their sources of news and information carefully. It is recommended to avoid internet blogs and social media groups that do not have Medical Professionals on staff nor are required to confirm any information before it is posted. Also, it is recommended to avoid internet articles and/or stories that do not cite credible sources. Fire Department updates contain information from the Center for Disease Control, World Health Organization, and other academic sources from established Medical Professionals.

Data Analysis

To understand the potential impacts of the Coronavirus here at home, it is important to look at this situation from a broad perspective and then narrow our focus from there.

- Global Perspective
  - According to the World Health Organization, there are 105,586 confirmed cases worldwide. Nearly 77% of these cases (80,859) are from China. Unfortunately, there have been 3,584 confirmed deaths relating to the Coronavirus worldwide. Of these deaths, nearly 86% have also occurred in China. Outside of mainland China, the Nations of Italy, Korea, and Iran have been hit the hardest by the Coronavirus to date.

- National Perspective
  - According to the Center for Disease Control, there are over 350 cases reported across the United States. The West Coast has been the hardest hit to date with nearly 250 of these cases occurring in the States of Washington and California. Not all cases have been “confirmed cases.” There have been deaths related to the Coronavirus in the United States and the majority of these have occurred in King County, Washington.

- State Perspective
  - According to the Chicago Department of Public Health, there have been 7 confirmed cases in Illinois. Cases 1 and 2 have fully recovered from the infection, Cases 3, 4, and 5 have been released and are recuperating at home, and Cases 6 and 7 remain in hospital care. The larger majority of “cases” reported in Illinois have turned out to be negative, but quarantine and isolation protocols were implemented to safeguard the general public.

Mode of Contraction

Several health agencies and organizations continue to report that the leading cause of contracting illness relating to the Coronavirus is travel-related. This does not mean that you cannot travel out of the US, but it does indicate that protective measures need to be taken when using modes of mass transit, such as airplanes, commuter trains, buses, taxi cabs, and alternates like Uber or Lyft. Be sure to wash your hands regularly after touching common surfaces and especially prior to eating or drinking any food items.
Recommended Actions

It is human nature to be anxious or concerned about the Coronavirus and many of us may feel a need to do something about it. There are actions that you can take to keep your body, home, and workplace as prepared as possible to confront any virus that may pose a risk, not just the Coronavirus!

1. Strengthen Your Immune System
   a. Make all efforts to eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables
   b. Make all efforts to perform some form of regular exercise (walking is exercise)
   c. Make all efforts you can to maintain a healthy body weight
   d. Make all efforts you can to get plenty of sleep
   e. Make all efforts you can to consume alcohol in moderation if you drink
   f. Make all efforts you can to maintain a clean personal environment

2. Steps to Avoid Infection
   a. Avoid close contact with persons that are sick
   b. Stay home from work, school, and public places if you are sick
   c. Avoid contact with wild animals and unfamiliar domesticated animals
   d. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water
   e. Dry your hands with disposable paper products & dispose of them afterwards
   f. Clean and disinfect objects & surfaces that are touched regularly

3. Cleaning & Disinfecting of Surfaces & Objects
   a. Office Setting
      i. Doorknobs & Door Handles
      ii. Computer Mouse & Keyboard
      iii. Telephones & Light Switch Panels
      iv. Cellphones, Tablets, & other Electronics
      v. Staplers, Scissors, & other Office Utensils
      vi. Desktops, Countertops, and Drawer Handles
   b. Home Setting
      i. Include all items from “Office Setting”
      ii. Stovetops & Gas Control Knobs
      iii. Refrigerator & Freezer Door Handles
      iv. Television, Stereo, & other Device Remote Controllers
      v. Game Console Controllers & objects shared by children
      vi. Thorough & routine cleaning of bathrooms
   c. Other Action Steps
      i. Do not share pens & other objects with other people
      ii. Wash hands after using ATMs, Card Readers, Keypads, etc.
      iii. Clean grocery cart handles prior to use, wash hands after use
      iv. Wash your hands BEFORE and AFTER using the bathroom
      v. Consider purchasing bakery, produce, & deli items that are pre-packaged
      vi. Avoid unnecessary touching of face, nose, eyes, and mouth

Additional information can be found at the following links:

https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses

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