
Saturday, January 26, 2020

Dear SMU Community,

Student Health Services is closely monitoring an outbreak of a potentially severe respiratory illness caused by a new [coronavirus](#) first detected in Wuhan City, China in December.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises that the immediate health risk of this new coronavirus to the general American public is low, SMU's Student Health Services is following the updates and recommendations of the CDC and Dallas County Health District in watching for symptoms of the illness, which may include fever, cough and shortness of breath.

Student Health Services staff are collecting information about travel history from patients during medical visits. Also, SMU International Student and Scholar Services staff are reaching out to members of the SMU community who may have traveled through the region.

The University's first concern is always the health and safety of its students, faculty and staff. People who think they may have been exposed to 2019-nCoV should contact a healthcare provider immediately.

The [Dr. Bob Smith Health Center](#) is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students experiencing symptoms of respiratory infection are encouraged to contact the Health Center at 214-768-2141, while faculty and staff should contact individual health providers or an urgent care facility. Students can find a listing of nearby urgent care facilities with extended hours [here](#).

The same precautions we encourage to prevent the spread of flu can help prevent the spread of any respiratory virus, including the coronavirus:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, and avoid contact with others until you have no fever.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

None of the reported cases of the illness has any known connection to SMU, but we believe it is important to share information about this global health concern. The most current and authoritative information is available at the CDC's [2019-nCoV Situation Summary](#).

Thank you,
Dr. Randy Jones
Associate Dean
Executive Director of Health Services