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To: EMS Providers

From: The Wisconsin EMS Office

**Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Providers in Wisconsin
Regarding COVID-19 associated with the Outbreak in Wuhan, China**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Division of Public Health (DPH) are closely monitoring an outbreak caused by COVID-19 that originated in Wuhan, China. Because guidance may change, continue to check the [CDC COVID-19 Situation Summary webpage](#) and the [DPH Outbreaks and Investigations webpage](#) to find the most up-to-date information.

Key Messages

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause illness in people and animals. They circulate regularly and can cause respiratory/flu-like illnesses each year.
- Rarely, coronaviruses that circulate between animals evolve and develop the ability infect people, and then begin to spread between people. This can lead to new strains becoming more widespread.
- To date, no confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection have been detected in Wisconsin.
- The immediate health risk to the general public in the U.S. is currently low.
- Movement restrictions (quarantine) of asymptomatic individuals traveling from Wuhan are not warranted at this time.
- Influenza is currently the predominant respiratory virus circulating in Wisconsin.

For EMS Providers

Continue to follow your agency's transmission-based infection prevention precautions and routinely ask patients about their travel history (and collect specific information about locations [city, country] and dates of travel).

For patients who have fever **AND** symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), and have **traveled from Wuhan City, China during the last 14 days before symptom onset**, follow the [CDC's interim infection prevention and control recommendations](#), which include:

- Asking the patient to wear a surgical mask,
- Using standard, contact, and airborne precautions, and eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield).

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Although there are no specific guidelines from the CDC for EMS at this time, the CDC's [updated guidance](#) provides recommendations for health care providers regarding the evaluation of patients for COVID-19, as well as prevention and infection control guidance, and information on specimen collection.