

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19



TRAVEL Q AND A

Please note that due to the developing nature of the COVID-19 coronavirus, some of the advice contained within this document may become irrelevant from moment to moment.



Question 1: How does the COVID-19 coronavirus spread?

According to the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC), the virus was originally transmitted from an animal to a person in a market in Wuhan City, but the virus is mostly being spread from person-to-person.

The virus is usually spread via respiratory droplets that are breathed-in or enter the body through the nose, eyes or mouth when someone has touched object containing respiratory droplets.

Question 2: How do I know if someone has COVID-19?

You can't be sure who has been infected with COVID-19 unless a specific test has been conducted, but anyone displaying flu symptoms of fever, cough, difficulty breathing and other flu symptoms should ideally maintain a distance of roughly a metre or more to prevent infection of flu.

Question 3: Should I cancel my travel plans?

No, Dr Carmen Dolea from the World Health Organization (WHO) has gone on record to say that there shouldn't be any trade or travel restrictions at this time, including most places in China. This is because the risk of being infected is low in most countries. The WHO suggests that travellers should not cancel their plans but should take into account the various restrictions that airlines have now put into place.

Question 4: Does being onboard a plane pose a threat?

Dr Dolea says, "absolutely not". Because the virus is transmitted via droplets, risk of infection in a cabin environment is minimised, particularly if you practise hand hygiene. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitiser. She also suggests practising the usual preventative measures for

respiratory infections and using coughing etiquette, which means covering your nose and mouth with your elbow when you cough and sneeze.

Question 5: Should I use a facemask?

If you are healthy, there is no need to use a facemask, according to Dr Doleo. The mask is only effective if someone who is already sick uses it to prevent transmitting infections further. If you do use a mask, try not to touch it in the same way you would avoid touching your nose and mouth.

Question 6: Are people of Asian descent more at risk of this virus?

No, people of all walks of life are equally at risk of this virus, explains Dr Doleo, and it is unwise to stigmatise one group of people for the potential threat of this disease. Any race, age and any gender can be infected with the virus.

Question 7: Where can I learn more about countries that have issued travel warnings?

The CDC has a travel information page that is regularly updated. You can visit the site to discover the very latest travel information and health advice regarding COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/>

Question 8: I've just been to China or somewhere that COVID-19 has recently been discovered. What now?

According to the CDC, if you have recently been in a place that may have exposed you to the COVID-19 coronavirus, you should stay at home and monitor your health for a 14-day period.

During this time, you should monitor your temperature, checking it at least twice per day.

In the event that you develop a high fever, cough or experience difficulty breathing you should contact a healthcare provider and stipulate that you have recently returned from a place that may have exposed you to the virus.

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases spokesperson, Sinenhlanhla Jimoh suggests the following to the South African public: "Persons should quickly seek medical attention from their health-care provider - they should disclose their travel history and seek assistance regarding isolation while waiting to be seen by a clinician to minimise possible infection to others."