



MedAire[®]
An International SOS Company

INFECTIOUS DISEASE & BEST PRACTICES FOR VESSELS

COVID-19: 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (2019-NCOV)

By the end of December 2019 a new virus epidemic was reported in central China, originating in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province. The disease is caused by a novel virus of the Coronavirus family, and was officially named Covid-19 by the World Health Organization on 11 February, 2020.

While the risk of infection to people that have not travelled to China recently is extremely low, many questions have been raised about personal precautions and infectious diseases.

This document provides recommendations to mitigate exposure to infectious diseases.

WHAT IS A CORONAVIRUS?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some of which can infect people.

Some cause mild illness, such as the strains responsible for some common colds. Others can potentially lead to severe, or even fatal, disease.

HOW DOES COVID-19 (2019-NCOV) SPREAD?

Transmission is believed to occur via two methods:

Environment-to-human: Information suggests that the novel coronavirus is zoonotic (transmitted from an animal source to humans). The initial cluster of cases appears to have a common source of exposure - a seafood and animal market in Wuhan, China.

Human-to-human: Transmission occurs from a sick person infected with Covid-19 to others who are in close contact.

In general, coronaviruses spread through infected respiratory droplets, just like other respiratory infections, including colds and influenza.

A sick person expels these droplets when they cough, sneeze, or talk. Others can get the disease via contact (direct or indirect) with these contaminated droplets, via inhalation or by touching their face.

At the time of this publication there was no evidence of sustained community transmission outside of the Hubei Province in China.

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CONTAINMENT STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION & MITIGATION

HOW CAN I IDENTIFY IF SOMEONE HAS A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE LIKE COVID-19?

The identification process, as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC), is as follows:

A case is suspected when a traveller (passenger or a crewmember) **has a fever (temperature of 38°C/100°F or greater) associated with one or more of the following signs or symptoms:**

- ▶ Appearing obviously unwell
- ▶ Persistent coughing
- ▶ Impaired breathing
- ▶ Persistent diarrhoea
- ▶ Persistent vomiting
- ▶ Skin rash
- ▶ Bruising or bleeding without previous injury
- ▶ Confusion of recent onset

In addition, inquire as to whether they have visited China within the past 14 days; and/ or they have had close contact with a person under investigation for Covid-19 / n-CoV?

WHAT IF I SUSPECT SOMEONE ON MY VESSEL HAS A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE?

PRE-TRIP

MedAire usually recommends against allowing anyone with active signs of a contagious disease to travel, regardless of the cause.

However, the approach can vary significantly depending on the medical profile of the country of departure, the clinical situation, and the medical resources available (medication and equipment).

MedAire clients are encouraged to call if they have concerns about their - or others' - symptoms and ability to travel safely.

ONBOARD

MedAire urges clients to call MedAire's MedLink service for help in assessing the medical situation on board.

MedAire's medical team is well experienced in providing recommendations aligned with best practices for each person's unique medical situation.



ONBOARD INFECTIOUS DISEASE MITIGATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ If the ill person is coughing, provide tissues. Request the tissues be used to cover their mouth and nose when they are speaking, sneezing and coughing.
- ☐ Provide a bag for the safe disposal of the tissues.
- ☐ Advise the ill person to practice proper hand hygiene - washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- ☐ If soap and water are not available, provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. If hands are visibly dirty, soap and water must be used.
- ☐ Ask the ill person to wear a surgical mask. As soon as it becomes damp, provide a replacement mask.
- ☐ Dispose used masks safely in a biohazard bag or equivalent.
- ☐ Practice proper hand hygiene immediately after handling the mask.
- ☐ Try to limit the person's interaction with others on board.
- ☐ Leave a space of two meters (6 feet) between the ill person and all others on board. If this is not possible, provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to anyone within the vicinity.
- ☐ Anyone attending the ill person should wear personal protective equipment (PPE) if they will be touching the ill person, their mask, or clothes and/or if there is a risk of direct contact with body fluids.
- ☐ If there is more than one head on board, restrict one for the exclusive use of the ill person. If there is only one head on board, thoroughly clean the surfaces after each use by the ill person. Use personal protective equipment when cleaning.
- ☐ If a person is suspected to be infected, they should not share a cabin with others that are not infected. Ideally, the cabin should be well-ventilated and the affected person provided with disinfectant to keep the area clean.
- ☐ The Captain may be required to report the suspected case(s) to appropriate authorities.

DISINFECTANT RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ As of 07 February 2020, there are no specific recommendations in regards to Covid-19 disinfectant.
- ▶ Most disinfectants labeled as germicides are deemed to be effective against this virus when used in recommended concentrations and contact time. Bleach-based products could be corrosive and should be avoided.
- ▶ You may also contact the vessel manufacturer's customer support for the cleaning and disinfection products they recommend.

DISPOSING OF BIOHAZARD MATERIAL

- ▶ Any contaminated material should be disposed into the biohazard bags.
- ▶ Biohazard disposal bags are often red in colour.
- ▶ Follow port-specific procedures at destination for the handling of the materials upon arrival.



BEST PRACTICES FOR CREW: **PREVENTION & MITIGATION**

I WAS RECENTLY IN CHINA. AM I SICK?

Crew and travellers should self-monitor their health for 14 days:

- ▶ Take temperature twice daily for fever 38°C (100.4°F) or higher, and watch for cough or difficulty breathing.
- ▶ Report any of the above signs or symptoms to your employer.
- ▶ Call doctor or local health department for advice.
- ▶ Notify local health department and authorities if above signs or symptoms occur and there was travel to China or potential exposure to a person suspected of being infected with Covid-19.

SHOULD MASKS BE WORN AS A PREVENTIVE MEASURE BY NON-ILL PEOPLE?

Face masks are not recommended for healthy people as protection from respiratory viruses, including 2019-nCoV/ Covid-19.

Coronaviruses spread through infected respiratory droplets, just like other respiratory infections, including colds and influenza. A sick person expels these droplets when they cough, sneeze, or talk.

Ill people should wear face masks to protect others from the risk of getting infected.

Masks should be left for those who are ill or have close contact with those who are ill and healthcare workers.

THE USE OF FACE MASKS

A facemask should be used by people who have been exposed to 2019-nCoV and are showing symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus.

VESSEL CONSIDERATION: CLOSE QUARTERS

Surgical masks should be offered to anyone on board that is coughing or sneezing.

Anyone in direct contact with a suspected case should also don a mask and additional personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed.

PPE is usually available in the on-board medical kits.

When considering the appropriate number of surgical masks to have available on board, consider the number of crew, the number of guests, and the duration of the voyage.

WHAT MASKS TO HAVE ON BOARD?

Surgical masks are usually protective enough for the affected person(s) onboard.

Surgical masks should also be worn by anyone attending to the ill person and anyone in close proximity (within 2 meters/ 6 feet).

N95 Masks are meant for the trained medical professional. They must be fitted properly for maximum protection.

For crew and guests on board, surgical masks should suffice if needed.



PREVENTION

- ▶ MAINTAIN GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE
- ▶ WASH HANDS FREQUENTLY AND CARRY HAND SANITIZER
- ▶ AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE
- ▶ AVOID DIRECT CONTACT WITH ANIMALS & THEIR ENVIRONMENT
- ▶ ENSURE FOOD, INCLUDING EGGS, ARE THOROUGHLY COOKED
- ▶ KEEP AWAY FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE SICK
- ▶ DO NOT TRAVEL IF YOU ARE ILL

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

MedAire is continuously monitoring developments and providing travel safety information to clients via the **MedAire Portal**.

MedAire Members can access the latest information about medical and travel safety events in the areas where they operate – and have updates delivered directly to their inbox.

Resources are also available on the MedAire website. Visit www.MedAire.com/coronavirus to see webinars, panel discussions, and download an informative pocket guide.

In addition, the following sources provide reliable information about the latest developments:

- ▶ World Health Organization
- ▶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Managing Ill Passengers/ Crew
- ▶ European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control: Novel Coronavirus
- ▶ IATA: Air Transport & Communicable Diseases

HOW CAN MEDAIRE SUPPORT MY VESSEL?

MedAire provides a number of services to support captains and crew with mitigating their exposure to infectious disease.

24/7 MEDICAL ADVICE & ASSISTANCE

MedAire Members may call for medical advice and assistance 24/7.

Members are encouraged to call and speak with a medical professional if they are concerned about their health.

In addition, should they become ill while on board, they can call MedAire for an initial assessment of their symptoms, and be referred to a quality medical facility if an in-person visit is recommended.

ONBOARD MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

MedAire provides a variety of medical kits that include personal precaution equipment (PPE) to help crew and guests protect themselves from exposure to communicable diseases.

TRAINING ON PROPER PPE TECHNIQUE

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) – and how to properly don and doff the equipment – is featured in MedAire's medical training.

All crew are encouraged to participate in the training.

