



General Q&A – Novel Coronavirus

- *What is COVID-19?*
COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has been identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in China. It is spread from person to person causing mild to severe respiratory illnesses. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that often cause respiratory tract infections. Common human coronaviruses cause upper respiratory tract infections with symptoms of the common cold. Occasionally, human coronaviruses can cause lower respiratory tract infections, like pneumonia. Two other human coronaviruses, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV, may cause severe infections.
- *Are there any cases of COVID-19 among UAH students, faculty or staff?*
To date, UAH has had no cases of COVID-19.
- *What are the signs/symptoms of COVID-19?*
Symptoms include: fever, dry cough, runny nose, shortness of breath, fatigue, and body aches.
- *How does COVID-19 spread?*
COVID-19 is spread from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Virus-carrying airborne droplets can remain in the air or on surfaces even after the ill person is no longer near.
- *What constitutes “contact” with someone who has COVID-19?*
The CDC defines close contact as (a) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case – or – (b) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).

- *How do I protect against COVID-19?*
 - Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
 - Avoid touching the nose, eyes, mouth and face with unwashed hands.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Stay home from work or class when you are sick.
 - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow if no tissue is available, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
 - Getting a flu shot will not prevent COVID-19, but can help keep you well during this flu season, and can keep you out of doctor's offices and hospitals where you could be exposed to others who are sick.

- *What should I do if I'm concerned I may have been exposed to COVID-19?*

Call your primary care physician, urgent care facility or Student Health Center first. Students who have traveled to a destination designated CDC Alert Level 2 or CDC Warning Level 3 in the last 14 days, or who have been in contact with someone with diagnosed COVID-19 in the last 14 days, AND are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, runny nose, dry cough, shortness of breath), please call Student Health Center at (256) 824-6775. Anyone who thinks they may have been exposed should call before coming to a clinic or emergency facility.

- *Is Alabama testing for COVID-19?*

Effective March 5, the Alabama Department of Public Health laboratory can test for COVID-19. Should you test positive for COVID-19, local and state health officials will issue next steps on your care, whether that is to be self-quarantined or isolated. These steps will be communicated to your employer and other necessary organizations.