

Wuhan novel coronavirus and avian flu: advice for travel to China

See [latest information and actions for the public on the outbreak of Wuhan novel coronavirus](#), including the current situation in the UK and actions taken in the UK and abroad.

28 January 2020

As of Tuesday 28 January 2020, there are currently no confirmed cases in the UK or of UK citizens abroad, and the risk to the public remains low.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) are advising against all but essential travel to the Hubei Province. Anyone travelling to China should remain vigilant and check the latest travel advice on [GOV.UK](#).

We have updated our guidance for individuals who have returned from Wuhan, China as follows:

If you have returned from Wuhan in the last 14 days:

- stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with other flu viruses
- call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the city

Yvonne Doyle, Medical Director at PHE, said:

Isolating yourself from other people, like you would with other flu viruses, is in step with the best scientific and expert advice on how to stop the coronavirus from spreading.

This means taking simple, common sense steps, such as staying at home and avoiding close contact with other people as much as possible.

If you have visited Wuhan and develop a fever, difficulty breathing or a cough within 14 days, you should seek medical attention either in China or on your return to the UK.

In the UK, please stay indoors and avoid contact with others where possible, call your GP or ring 111 informing them of your symptoms and your recent travel to the city.

22 January 2020

UK public health measures are world leading and our excellent NHS is well prepared to manage and treat new diseases. We have been carefully monitoring

the situation in Wuhan for some time and are ready to put in place proportionate, precautionary measures.

From today, 22 January 2020, enhanced monitoring will be in place from all direct flights from Wuhan to the UK. The enhanced monitoring package includes a number of measures that will help to provide advice to travellers if they feel unwell.

For those travelling back directly from Wuhan, this includes a Port Health team who will meet each direct flight aircraft to provide advice and support to those that feel unwell. The team will include the Principal Port Medical Inspector, Port Health Doctor, Administrative Support, and Team Leader.

They will check for symptoms of coronavirus and provide information to all passengers about symptoms and what to do if they become ill. Mandarin and Cantonese language support will be available to Public Health England (PHE) and leaflets will be available to passengers.

There are 3 direct flights a week that arrive at Heathrow from Wuhan. The enhanced monitoring of direct flights will be kept under continuous review and expanded to other Chinese departure points if necessary.

Leaflets and information will be made available across all UK airports, advising travellers from China on what to do if they feel unwell.

The risk to the UK population has been assessed as low, based on the emerging evidence regarding case numbers, potential sources and human to human transmission, the risk to travellers to Wuhan is moderate. This has been raised from very low due to current evidence on the likelihood of cases being imported into this country.

There are currently no confirmed cases of this new infection in the UK.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) issued clinical guidance for the detection and diagnosis of Wuhan Novel Coronavirus and PHE has developed a diagnostic test, making the UK one of the first countries outside China to have a prototype specific laboratory test for this novel disease.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director, National Infection Service, Public Health England, said:

This is a new and rapidly evolving situation where information on cases and the virus is being gathered and assessed daily. Based on the available evidence, the current risk to the UK is considered low. We are working with the WHO and other international partners, have issued advice to the NHS and are keeping the situation under constant review.

If you are traveling to Wuhan, you should maintain good hand, respiratory and personal hygiene and should avoid visiting animal and bird markets or people who are ill with respiratory symptoms. Individuals should seek medical attention if they develop

respiratory symptoms within 14 days of visiting Wuhan, either in China or on their return to the UK. They should phone ahead before attending any health services and mention their recent travel to the city.

Previous updates

20 January 2020

As of Monday 20 January 2020, the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission has reported 217 cases of Wuhan Novel Coronavirus. Four of these cases have been diagnosed outside of China – 2 in Thailand, one in Japan and one in South Korea, following travel to Wuhan, China. There have also now been cases in other cities in China. There have been 3 fatalities.

Based on the latest information and analysis, the World Health Organization (WHO) has said that there is evidence of limited human to human transmission of the virus.

Currently, the risk to the UK population is very low and the risk to travellers to Wuhan is low, but the situation is under constant review. However, in line with our robust preparedness activities for emerging infections, we have issued clinical guidance for the detection and diagnosis of Wuhan Novel Coronavirus. There are no confirmed cases of this new infection in the UK.

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director, National Infection Service, Public Health England, said:

Based on the available evidence, the current risk to the UK is very low. We are working with the WHO and other international partners, have issued advice to the NHS and are keeping the situation under constant review.

People travelling to Wuhan should maintain good hand, respiratory and personal hygiene and should avoid visiting animal and bird markets or people who are ill with respiratory symptoms. Individuals should seek medical attention if they develop respiratory symptoms within 14 days of visiting Wuhan, either in China or on their return to the UK, informing their health service prior to their attendance about their recent travel to the city.

13 January 2020

Public Health England (PHE) is monitoring the situation with international partners, including the World Health Organization (WHO). PHE has also issued advice to travellers ahead of Chinese New Year this month.

The risk to the UK population is very low and the risk to travellers to Wuhan is low, but they are advised to take simple precautions such as practicing

good hand and personal hygiene and minimise contact with birds and animals in markets in Wuhan as a further precaution.

The Wuhan Municipal Health Commission has reported 41 cases of the disease so far, the majority of which appear to be connected to a seafood and animal market in the city. There have been no deaths reported and there is no significant evidence of transmission from person to person or any signs of illness among medical and nursing staff.

Dr Nick Phin, National Infection Service Deputy Director at PHE, said on the reported Wuhan novel coronavirus:

Based on the available evidence, the risk to travellers to Wuhan from this disease is low and we are not advising them to change their plans.

In order to minimise the risk of transmission, people travelling to the area should maintain good hand and personal hygiene. Travellers should seek medical attention if they develop respiratory symptoms within 14 days of visiting Wuhan, informing their health service prior to their attendance about their recent travel to the city.

The risk to the UK population is very low. The UK has robust arrangements to manage emerging diseases and we can draw on our experience of developing pioneering diagnostic tests in humans for the coronaviruses – SARS and MERS.

Besides the evolving situation in Wuhan, all travellers should also be aware of the risk of avian flu when visiting China during the Chinese New Year, or Spring Festival, beginning on 25 January 2020.

Human cases of avian influenza have recently been reported in China, and historically there have been more cases at this time of year. Cases have originated from several provinces and municipalities across mainland China, and there have been a small number of avian influenza cases among Hong Kong SAR and Taiwan residents who have travelled to mainland China.

The majority of reported human cases in China have had close contact with wild birds or poultry. Although the risk is very low, Public Health England and the National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) are reminding UK travellers to protect themselves from avian flu by minimising exposure to wild birds and poultry.

Dr Phin added on avian flu:

Although the risk of avian flu to UK residents travelling to China remains very low, anyone planning to visit China, Hong Kong SAR or Taiwan should minimise their exposure to any birds such as wild birds or live birds in 'wet markets' as a precaution.

We strongly urge people to avoid touching dead or dying birds and maintain good hand and personal hygiene.

Avian influenza remains a risk in a number of parts of China and if travellers experience coughing or difficulty breathing within 14 days of returning from China, they should call their GP or NHS 111 and report their recent travel.

Travellers can check [NaTHNaC's TravelHealthPro](#) website for current travel health recommendations for: