

Case Definition for Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Person under Investigation for 2019-nCoV

A person with fever and acute respiratory illness, or pneumonia

AND any of the following:

Travel to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before onset of illness

OR

Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of 2019-nCoV

OR

Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to Wuhan, China within 14 days prior to their illness onset

Probable Case for 2019-nCoV

A person:

with fever (over 38 degrees Celsius) AND new onset of (or exacerbation of chronic) cough or breathing difficulty AND evidence of severe illness progression e.g. acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) or severe influenza-like illness (may include complications such as encephalitis, myocarditis or other severe and life-threatening complications)

AND any of the following:

Travel to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before onset of illness

OR

Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of 2019-nCoV

OR

Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to Wuhan, China within 14 days prior to their illness onset

AND

in whom laboratory diagnosis of 2019-nCoV is not available or negative (if specimen quality or timing is suspect)

Presumptive Positive Case for 2019-nCoV

A person in whom the laboratory screening test for 2019-nCoV was positive from the Public Health Ontario Laboratory but not confirmed by the National Microbiological Laboratory.

Confirmed Case for 2019-nCoV

A person with laboratory confirmation of infection with 2019-nCoV which consists of positive real-time PCR on at least two specific genomic targets or a single positive target with sequencing AND confirmed by NML by nucleic acid testing.

Case Definition Footnotes

1. The incubation period of 2019-nCoV is unknown. SARS-CoV demonstrated a prolonged incubation period (median 4-5 days; range 2-10 days) compared to other human coronavirus infections (average 2 days; typical range 12 hours to 5 days). The incubation period for MERS-CoV is approximately 5 days (range 2-14 days). Allowing for variability and recall error and to establish consistency with the World Health Organization's 2019-nCoV case definition, exposure history based on the prior 14 days is recommended at this time.
2. A close contact is defined as a person who provided care for the patient, including healthcare workers, family members or other caregivers, or who had other similar close physical contact OR who lived with or otherwise had close prolonged contact with a probable or confirmed case while the case was ill.
3. Other exposure scenarios not specifically mentioned here may arise and may be considered at jurisdictional discretion (e.g. history of being a patient in the same ward or facility during a nosocomial outbreak of 2019-nCoV).
4. There is limited evidence on the likelihood of 2019-nCoV presenting as a co-infection with other pathogens. At this time, the identification of one causative agent should not exclude 2019-nCoV where the index of suspicion may be high.
5. Laboratory confirmation may not be available due to no possibility of acquiring samples for laboratory testing of 2019-nCoV.
6. Laboratory tests are evolving for this emerging pathogen, and laboratory testing recommendations will change accordingly as new assays are developed and validated.