



DEPARTEMENT GESUNDHEIT UND SOZIALES

Kantonaler Sozialdienst

Unterabteilung Asyl, Sektion Betreuung

27. Februar 2020

INFORMATION AND RULES OF CONDUCT

Coronavirus – COVID-19

1. Information about the virus

SARS-CoV-2, the novel Coronavirus, was first diagnosed in China. The virus is part of the same family as the SARS and MERS viruses. Originally, the virus has been traced to animals. The first cases occurred in Wuhan City, China, in December 2019. Since then, the virus has been spreading through human-to-human transmission. The infection caused by SARS-CoV-2 is referred to as COVID-19 (Corona Virus Infection Disease 2019).

Transmission

SARS-CoV-2 is mainly transmitted via respiratory droplets: When an infected person coughs or sneezes, viruses can land directly on the mucous membranes of other people's noses, mouths or eyes. Moreover, viruses can survive in tiny droplets on hands or surfaces (door handles, buttons, etc.) for several hours. These viruses can be transmitted to the mucous membranes of the nose, mouth or eyes when people touch their face. However, as a rule, contagion occurs predominantly when there is close contact with an infected person (less than 2 metres for more than 15 minutes).

Incubation period

Once a person is infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the first symptoms usually appear after 4 - 7 days (range extends from 1 - 14 days). It is possible that people may already be contagious 48 hours before the first symptoms are showing.

Symptoms of COVID-19 (Corona Virus Infection Disease 19)

In the first phase, i.e. after the incubation period, frequent symptoms are general indisposition, tiredness and fever, similar to influenza. This is usually followed by respiratory symptoms, typically dry cough. Head aches, muscle aches, nausea and diarrhoea are less common. The majority of cases are mild, and there are also cases where no symptoms occur.

If the disease follows a serious course, patients may experience shortness of breath and, in the worst case, pneumonia with respiratory distress and infection of further organ systems. Elderly patients and patients with chronic prior conditions are most susceptible to severe forms of the disease.

2. Conduct and protection against contagion

Hygiene measures

At the current stage, no specific recommendations have been issued for the general population. However, it is very important that the basic hygiene measures which generally apply during the influenza and cold season are observed in day-to-day life:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with water and soap on a regular basis.



- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Discard used tissues in a bin and wash your hands thoroughly with water and soap. Cough and sneeze into your elbow if you have no tissue at hand.



- If you show any symptoms (breathing difficulties, cough or fever), remain in your room and notify your responsible staff member.



Face masks

At present, it is not routinely recommended that healthy people wear masks.

There is no reliable evidence that simple face masks worn in public or in contact with infected patients protect healthy people against contagion. Respiratory droplets can pass through the gaps at either side of the face mask if the mask is not close-fitting. Over time, breath moistens the face mask which can also reduce its protective impact. Moreover, the viruses are so small that they can pass through the material and reach the upper respiratory tract through inhalation. However, some studies have shown that face masks help lower the risk of infection by reducing the number of times people touch their mouth, nose or eyes with potentially contaminated hands.

For infected patients, surgical masks can significantly reduce the spread of the viruses, catching most of the respiratory droplets when the patients cough or sneeze. However, this only applies if the mask is worn correctly.

Special masks (FFP) which provide a barrier against viruses are used by medical staff. These masks must be worn by anyone who is in contact with, nurses or treats infected patients.

Keep calm and follow instructions

The Aargau Cantonal government is carefully analysing the situation and taking the necessary measures on the basis of the information provided by federal government experts and other qualified professionals. It is important that everybody keeps calm and follows the instructions and recommendations of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH).