

Message to all U3A Sydney Members Regarding COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)



U3A provides the following advice to members based on NSW Health Infectious Diseases Branch information as of the 5th March 2020:

If you have recently returned from overseas

If you have recently returned from any of the following countries

Mainland China, Korea, or Iran, even if only in transit,

or visited another countries at risk of COVID-19 coronavirus, including

Cambodia, Hong Kong, Japan, Italy, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore,

in the previous 14 days please do not return to your U3A course for 14 days after you left that country and monitor yourself for symptoms.

Have you been to a country at risk?

NSW Health advises that if you have been to a country at risk, you should use social distancing from others.

This includes keeping a 1.5 metre distance from other in a public space.

For more detailed or up to date information go to the website

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/coronavirus-faqs.aspx>

The situation is evolving rapidly so the list of countries could change.

If you are feeling unwell or have been exposed to someone with the virus

Please do not attend a U3A course, a meeting or an event. Stay at home.

Venue Closures

It is possible that a venue owner(s) may suspend classes at some venues. These will be advised as closures occur.

Prevention of the spread of the virus requires common sense.

- Wash your hands in soap and water for twenty seconds or use an alcohol hand wash before a meeting or after touching what could be contaminated surfaces in public areas.
- Practice good cough etiquette at a course or meeting. Cover your nose or face with a tissue if you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.
- Avoid hugging or shaking hands at a course or meeting.

Useful Information about the virus

How is the virus spread?

Human coronaviruses are spread through contaminated droplets spread by coughing or sneezing, or by contact with contaminated hands, surfaces or objects.

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The time between when a person is exposed to the virus and when symptoms first appear is typically 5 to 6 days, although may range from 2 to 14 days.

The virus may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. Surfaces can be cleaned with common disinfectants.

What are the symptoms?

Infected people may have fever, cough, runny nose, shortness of breath and other symptoms. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia with severe acute respiratory distress.

Like influenza, for an individual with other ongoing health issues, such as a respiratory condition, recovery may take weeks and in severe cases could be potentially fatal.

Vaccination

It is suggested that a flu vaccination will assist in reducing the impact of infection of the both the flu plus COVID-19 coronavirus.

There is no vaccination at present for COVID-19 coronavirus.

If you develop fever or respiratory symptoms

Please **ring** your doctor, or your local emergency department, or Health direct on 1800 022 222.

If you need to seek medical care:

- Wear a surgical mask, if available, when attending your doctor or hospital
- Alert the front desk that you are suspected of having the virus.

Where can I find more information?

- National Coronavirus Health Information Line 1800 020 080
- Visit [NSW Health - Novel coronavirus](#)
- Visit the [World Health Organization](#)
- The ABC is posting daily 'Coronacast' podcasts with experts answering submitted questions