

COVID-19 Fact Sheet

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An Employers Guide

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What is COVID-19?

According to the World Health Organisation, COVID-19 (otherwise known as Coronavirus) is a new strain of a family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). COVID-19 is believed to be zoonotic, which means it has been transmitted between animals and people.

How is COVID-19 Spread?

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus which primarily involves the lungs. It is thought to spread in the same way as cold and flu: sneezes and coughs propelling fine airborne droplets and aerosols into the air or onto hands that then touch other surfaces, or by touching our eyes, nose or mouth after contact with contaminated surfaces.

Symptoms of COVID-19

Common signs of COVID-19 infection can include respiratory symptoms. These include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Breathing difficulties

In more severe cases the infection has been known to cause pneumonia, kidney failure or severe acute respiratory syndrome.

Preparing your workplace:

1. Keep informed and up-to-date on current recommendations.

2. Implement infection prevention and control.

- Reinforce the importance of good hand hygiene - effective hand washing technique with soap or using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- Signs on correct coughing and sneezing etiquette should be displayed.
- Additional workplace cleaning of environmental surfaces with a neutral detergent followed by a disinfectant solution is recommended. Alcohol wipes should be provided to be used on smaller surfaces such as shared keyboards or telephones.
- Unwell employees with respiratory symptoms or fever should not attend work. If they develop symptoms whilst at work, they should be advised to go home.
- Appoint a pandemic disease manager where possible to direct preparation activities, and manage the implementation of risk control systems.

3. Adherence to the current recommendations by the National Guidelines for self-isolation or self-monitoring for all.

References:

1. WHO Standard Recommendations and Advice: <http://bit.ly/38NtjxB>
2. WHO Coronavirus health topic: <http://bit.ly/2Ua5HiC>
3. Australian Government Department of Health: <http://bit.ly/2Q8hEp4>
4. Australian Government: Department of Health: <http://bit.ly/2TCClZs>

Preparing your workplace:

4. Social Distancing

To manage the direct risk of infection, social distancing can be used as a control measure. Social distancing including physical contact and proximity restrictions can be implemented. The suggested guidelines are:

- Discourage kissing, handshaking and other related physical contacts in the workplace.
- Ensure a one-metre distance between employees in the workplace.
- Use work from home where necessary.
- Discontinue meetings and all social gatherings at work.
- Use telephone and video conferencing.

Our Support Services

InjuryNet has developed COVID-19 specific services for employers and employees to assist in the management of COVID-19. These services include:

1. Triage General Advice

A triage person speaks to the employee and provides general advice about COVID-19

2. Nurse Triage Case Advice

A triage nurse speaks to the employee and conducts a clinical assessment. Depending on the outcome, the triage nurse will provide the employee with advice on self-management, self isolation or referral for testing.


3. Escalation to Medical Advisors

The triage nurse will discuss the case with the medical advisor. Depending on the case, either the nurse or the medical advisor will re-contact the employee to discuss recommendations and further management.

4. Chief Medical Officer Support

One of our three in-house medical advisors are available to provide advice.

If you would like more information or discuss the particular circumstances in your workplace, please contact us:

For more information:  1300 307 418

 support@injury.net.com.au

5. WorkSafe - Preparing pandemic guide employers: <http://bit.ly/3cQCVKH>
6. WHO - Preparing for large-scale community transmission of COVID-19: <http://bit.ly/2W3mhBQ>
7. Australian Government of Health; Coronavirus (COVID-19) isolation guidance: <http://bit.ly/38B2QTj>