

Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (/)

Information for transplant programs and OPOs regarding 2019 Novel Coronavirus

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The recent outbreak of a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China and the finding of infection in many other countries including the United States has led to questions among transplant programs, Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) and patients. The Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) strives to provide up-to-date information to answer these questions and to provide guidance as needed. Accordingly, the OPTN Ad Hoc Donor Transmission Advisory Committee (DTAC), American Society of Transplantation (AST) and the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), after careful review of information available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), offers the following information to transplant programs and OPOs in light of these concerns.

General Information

On December 31, 2019, an outbreak of pneumonia in Wuhan, China was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO). Shortly thereafter it was identified as a novel coronavirus referred to as 2019-nCoV. In the early part of the outbreak, infected people appeared to have a link to a large seafood and animal market suggesting a zoonotic source. Subsequently, it appears that it can also be transmitted person-to-person, most likely from respiratory droplets. Further investigation is ongoing so that more details on its origin and mode of transmission are anticipated.

The infection spread beyond China in early January 2020 to other parts of Asia with cases also identified worldwide, including the United States.

CDC continues to work closely with WHO to monitor the situation and frequently update information that can be accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>).

[CDC is also conducting entry screening of passengers](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p0117-coronavirus-screening.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p0117-coronavirus-screening.html>), on direct and connecting flights from potential affected flights to airports in the United States.

In addition, the ex-officio DTAC member from CDC is keeping OPTN abreast of new developments.

Risk of Transmission

Risk of transmitting disease through solid organ transplantation is not known at the time. The CDC COVID-19 website provides the most up to date information regarding recommended precautions, global risk assessment, and travel: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>).

Precautions to Implement for Transplant Programs with a patient suspected of being infected with 2019-nCoV

Although transmission dynamics have yet to be determined, follow these CDC recommendations if evaluating a patient suspected of having 2019-nCoV:

- Mask the patient.
- Move the patient to a private room with the door closed. If available, place the patient in an airborne infection isolation room.
- Use airborne and contact precautions with face shield when entering the patient room.
- If you suspect infection with 2019-nCoV, report concern to your local infection prevention personnel and to your state and local health departments immediately.
- If you suspect the infection came from the transplanted organ(s), notify the host OPO and report the event through the OPTN Improving Patient Safety Portal within 24 hours.
- Follow updated guidelines from:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control.html> (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control.html>).

We encourage the transplant community to stay vigilant at this time. Given the evolving understanding of the epidemiology of 2019-nCoV we encourage reporting of any suspected donor or recipient infection.

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