

An Important Update from the Infection Prevention Team

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

BAYADA is committed to providing home health care services *with the highest professional, ethical, and safety standards*. Part of this commitment is providing you, our employees, with education to keep you safe.

With the current media attention on COVID-19, we understand you may have questions about what is true and what is not, and how that may affect you and your loved ones. Please review the frequently asked questions and answers below to equip yourself with correct, current information about the virus—and hopefully put your mind at ease, as well.

As of **March 11, 2020**, please follow the guidelines below. We will provide updated information as necessary.

What is Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

It is a new Coronavirus that was recently detected in Wuhan, China.

Coronaviruses in general are a large family of viruses that typically circulate during cold and flu season and cause mild respiratory illness.

COVID-19 is spreading from person-to-person in China, and person-to-person spread among close contacts has been detected in several countries outside China, including recently, the United States.

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. Person-to-person spread means:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet)
- From respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can possibly land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby, be inhaled into the lungs, or land on surfaces that people touch.

COVID-19 is an emerging disease and there is more to learn about how it is transmitted, the severity of the virus, and what will happen in the United States.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms are similar to other respiratory viruses and may include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

How soon after exposure to COVID-19 do signs and symptoms occur?

Symptoms occur anywhere from 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.

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What is the risk to me?

- For the majority of people, the immediate risk of being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low. There is not widespread circulation in most communities in the United States.
- People in places where ongoing community spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 has been reported are at elevated risk of exposure, with increase in risk dependent on the location.
- There are currently no clients on service at BAYADA with Novel Coronavirus.
- Clinical staff currently working in hospitals where clients with COVID-19 are receiving care are being provided with education and support to prevent transmission.
- The CDC has placed very tight controls on the entry of people to the United States from China and other areas where person-to-person transmission has occurred.

What is BAYADA doing to keep me safe?

- BAYADA has an Infection Prevention Program that provides the highest standards of infection prevention practices as recommended by the CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- The annual education *Staying Healthy: A Guide to Infection Prevention* booklet outlines all of these practices; if you have misplaced your copy, please contact your office or go to www.bayada.com/staying-healthy.asp.
- BAYADA has issued new procedures for employee travel-related concerns for guidance with managing potentially exposed employees.
- BAYADA continues to develop educational resources as the situation evolves in the United States and is sending daily communication updates to offices for guidance to best support you and our clients.

What can I do to keep clients and myself safe?

- Open communication with your office is a key element to keeping both you and your clients safe.
- Alert your office if you or a family member are traveling to or have traveled to one of the affected regions in the past 14 days.
 - If you are traveling and unsure if your destination is affected by this outbreak, [click here](#) for important travel and safety information.
 - Please note that the CDC currently recommends that travelers avoid all non-essential travel to China, Iran, South Korea, and Italy. [Click here](#) for more details.
 - Upon return to the United States from an impacted region, please follow CDC recommendations which include at a minimum monitoring for any signs or symptoms for 14 days post-travel from a level 2 region; and self-quarantine, self-monitoring and social distancing for travel from level 3 regions. Seek immediate medical attention if any signs and symptoms occur. For more information, please review the CDC "[Travelers from Countries with Widespread Sustained \(Ongoing\) Transmission Arriving in the United States](#)" resource.
- In general, whether you travel to an area where this virus is present or not, **please do not come to work sick.**
- Alert your office of any communication that is shared with you by your clients, their families, your friends, or relatives regarding possible exposure to COVID-19 upon travel to an area where COVID-19 is present, so we can provide you with any additional information to keep everyone safe.

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- Consistently follow all recommended practices for hand hygiene and standard precautions, including using gloves and personal protective equipment (for example, surgical masks) when caring for a client with influenza, and safety needles to prevent exposure to blood and body fluids.

For more information about the COVID-19, visit [the CDC website](#).

Please feel free to contact your office with any questions or concerns.