



COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Advice from the Chief Medical Officer to Parents of School Children travelling from affected regions

27 February 2020

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is the infectious disease caused by a new virus identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.

Ireland has comprehensive Public Health and Emergency Plans in place for responding to public health issues, like the emergence of COVID-19. These Frameworks have been used in the past to manage emergencies such as the Swine Flu pandemic, Storms Emma and Ophelia, SARS and Ebola.

In line with WHO (World Health Organization) guidelines, Ireland is currently operating a containment strategy, where our focus is on identifying all cases and their contacts early, to prevent further spread of the disease.

If your child has been to an affected region in the last 14 days **and has symptoms** (a cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties or fever) they should stay at home and you should phone your GP immediately. Your GP is equipped to assess your child and you should follow the advice they give.

If your child has been to an affected region in the last 14 days **and has no symptoms**, you should visit www.hse.ie for information. There is no need for them to stay off school or to remain separate from other people.

The list of affected regions is available at www.hse.ie.

COVID-19 is spread through contact with an infected person's body fluids (e.g. droplets from coughing or sneezing), or by touching surfaces that an infected person has coughed or sneezed on.

Regular handwashing and covering your mouth and nose when you sneeze, or cough, is the most important way to protect from Covid-19. Current information suggests that simple household disinfectants can kill the virus. Further information is available at gov.ie/health-covid-19.

Updated travel advice by country, on COVID-19 (Coronavirus), is available at www.dfa.ie.

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