

Coronavirus and muscular dystrophy

02 March 2020

With the first case of a new coronavirus called novel coronavirus or 2019-nCoV, reported in New Zealand, we've had some questions from our community about the risk to people with muscular dystrophy in New Zealand.

MDANZ has been monitoring the advice from the Ministry of Health (MoH) through daily updates on the [Ministry of Health website](#). The MoH is confident that the swift actions by the person and their family, and the health sector, means there is a low risk of any spread into the community from this case. **New Zealand does not have COVID-19 circulating in our communities.**

We knew the likelihood of an imported case in New Zealand was high, however, the likelihood of a widespread outbreak is low-moderate. It is critically important that we all work together to protect New Zealanders from COVID-19 and play our part in the global effort to contain it.

The MoH recommends following the usual hygiene practices to reduce passing on acute respiratory infections, including:

- regularly washing hands (for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap and dry thoroughly)
- covering your mouth and nose when you sneeze
- staying home if you are sick
- avoiding close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms
- if you feel unwell you should avoid public gatherings and events.

The symptoms of 2019-nCoV are similar to other illnesses and include a fever, cough and difficulty breathing.

We are closely monitoring this rapidly evolving situation and following guidance from the MoH. We will advise you if any further public health measures are needed.

For COVID-19 health advice and information, contact the Healthline team (for free) on [0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453) or [+64 9 358 5453](tel:+6493585453) for international numbers.

Take home message

MDANZ will continue to stay up to date with the MoH recommendations. We will publish any important updates for our MDANZ community on our website and [Facebook page](#).

Please continue to follow the advice and infection control protocols of your healthcare team and if you have any concerns please contact your GP.

You can learn more about 2019-nCoV and stay updated daily on the [Ministry of Health website](#).