The following letter was sent to the MIT Community on January 24, 2020:

Dear Members of the MIT Community,

MIT is closely monitoring an outbreak of a new coronavirus (2019-nCoV), which originated in Wuhan, a city in central China. To date, there have been at least two confirmed cases in the US with others suspected to have the virus; all appear to involve individuals who recently traveled to the US from Wuhan. As of now, there is no identified risk to the MIT community.

Symptoms of the 2019-nCoV virus include fever and symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough and difficulty breathing. In some cases, the virus has led to lower respiratory tract illnesses, including bronchitis and pneumonia.

Symptoms of coronavirus may be similar to the flu or even the common cold. If you are experiencing these symptoms but have not recently traveled to an affected area in China, you mostly likely have a bad cold or the flu. MIT Medical has confirmed cases of flu on campus that are unrelated to the coronavirus. If you think you may have the flu, you can call 617-253-4865 to talk with a triage nurse at MIT Medical, who can review your symptoms and give you advice about what to do next.

If you have traveled from central China in the past 14 days and have a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, contact MIT Medical immediately.

- If you can, call 617-253-4865 to talk with a nurse before you come to Urgent Care. Tell the nurse about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- If you have a mask, wear the mask when you come into Urgent Care, or put on a mask immediately when you arrive. Avoid close contact with other people.
- Avoid spreading your illness. Wash your hands often — or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer — and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.

All members of the MIT community are urged to follow the same strategies they would ordinarily use to protect themselves and others during a normal cold and flu season:

- If you haven’t gotten a flu shot yet, get one now. You can call MIT Medical’s Primary Care Service at 617-258-9355 to make an appointment.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you are feeling sick.

The most up-to-date information about this new coronavirus is available from the CDC.

MIT, MIT Medical, and the Cambridge Department of Public Health are working together and monitoring the situation closely, and we will be keeping the Institute community informed via the MIT Medical website as we learn more about the virus, if new risks are identified, or if we have updated recommendations.

Sincerely,

Cecilia Stuopis, MD, FACOG
Medical Director

Shawn Ferullo, MD
Chief of Student Health