

Coronavirus Update

March 9, 2020

Background

The Coronavirus (Covid-19) situation continues to evolve both internationally and in New Zealand. This Coronavirus Update should be read in conjunction with previous updates.

The World Health Organization continues to advocate for containment of Covid-19 as a priority for saving lives, while recognising that a one-size fits all approach is not appropriate.

On March 3rd, the New Zealand government amended its advice regarding travel to different countries, including the addition of Category 1B Countries.

Covid-19 Spread and Symptoms

Covid-19 is spread by droplets from person to person and under ideal conditions, the virus may survive for several days on some surfaces.

The incubation period (the duration between being exposed and developing symptoms) of Covid-19 is uncertain, with estimates varying from 1 to 14 days.

Symptoms include fever (>38 degrees C), cough and breathing difficulty. Less commonly, diarrhoea, vomiting or skin rash may be present.

The majority of cases of Covid-19 are mild and resolve spontaneously, but approximately 20% may progress to severe lung disease requiring hospitalisation. Currently, the death rate appears low (in the order of 1%).

As yet, there is no vaccination available for coronavirus, and there is no coronavirus specific treatment that has been proven to be effective.

New Zealand Travel Status (as of March 4, 2020)

- **Category 1A Countries:** China and Iran

Safetravel New Zealand currently advises New Zealanders not to travel to China and Iran (Category 1A Countries).

People who travel to New Zealand from or via (excluding airport transit) Category 1A countries should self-isolate for 14 days following departure from the Category 1A country and register with Healthline ([0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453)).

- **Category 1B Countries:** Northern Italy (specifically the provinces of Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna) and Republic of Korea

There are currently no travel restrictions in place to Category 1B Countries. People who have travelled from or via Category 1B countries (excluding airport transfer) should self-isolate for 14 days following departure from the Category 1B country and register with Healthline ([0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453)).

- **Category Two** countries: Hong Kong, Italy (other than Northern Italy), Japan, Singapore and Thailand

People who have travelled from or via Category Two countries (excluding airport transfer) should be alert for Covid-19 symptoms. They do not have to self-isolate if well. They should self-isolate if they develop any symptoms of concern and ring Healthline ([0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453)) if they develop symptoms within 14 days of departing the Category Two country.

For up to date New Zealand information please see:

- **World Health Organization:**
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- **NZ Ministry of Health:**
<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>
<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public>
- **Safetravel NZ:**
<https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/news/novel-coronavirus-china-2019-ncov>

Medical Care for Supported Athletes During the Covid-19 Situation

As witnessed by events in Auckland Hospital recently, the unintended exposure to a potentially infectious individual can result in a significant service impact.

While the New Zealand Ministry of Health recognises Category 1A, 1B and 2 countries for particular management recommendations, the WHO recognises a suspect case as anyone who is symptomatic (fever and respiratory symptoms) and has “a history of travel to or residence in a country/area or territory reporting local transmission”. This list of countries reporting local transmission is extensive and growing.

It is currently possible that an athlete presenting to a HPSNZ facility with symptoms of fever, cough or breathing difficulties, who subsequently tests positive for Covid-19 could result in the closure of that facility for a 2-week period. We are actively trying to address this situation with the following requirements.

HPSNZ Training Centre Requirements

(until further notice)

- Any athlete (or coach/support staff member), regardless of whether recently travelled or not, should not attend any training facility if feeling unwell with fever and/or respiratory symptoms.
- Unwell (fever and/or respiratory symptoms) athletes or coach/support staff member should seek advice from their Medical Director or General Practitioner over the phone in advance of presenting to an HPSNZ Performance Health Centre.
- Unwell athletes (fever and/or respiratory symptoms) who have been overseas within two weeks of becoming unwell, should call the dedicated Coronavirus Healthline number (0800 358 5453) for advice. Prior to attending any training or health consultations, those athletes should phone their NSO Medical Director or the HPSNZ Director of Performance Health for further plans.
- All athletes returning from overseas and intending to enter either an HPSNZ training centre or Performance Health Centre should ensure that their return to training and attending the HPSNZ centre has been agreed by the NSO leadership and the NSO Medical Director (this will preferably have been completed in advance, or on return as required). In the absence of a Medical Director, the HPSNZ Director of Performance Health may be contacted for advice.

NSOs are reminded that it remains the responsibility of NSO leadership to ensure that athletes, coaches and support staff understand their public health responsibilities and manage these appropriately.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I avoid catching the Coronavirus?

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathrooms, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol. (HPSNZ utilises ‘Zoono’)
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid animals (alive or dead), animal markets, and products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat).

What are the symptoms of Coronavirus?

- Symptoms of Coronavirus most frequently include fever, cough, shortness of breath and sore throat, but vomiting and diarrhoea may also be present (see <https://www.healthy.org.nz/> for further symptom details).

What do I do if I think I may have Coronavirus?

- If you have symptoms and may have been in contact with someone with Coronavirus, you should phone Healthline’s dedicated Covid-19 number 0800 358 5453 (+64 9 358 5453 from overseas) or contact your GP by phone.
- **Do not** come directly to an HPSNZ Performance Health centre or General Practice, and **do not** attend training.

Should I be wearing a mask?

- The CDC and other world leading health organisations do not recommend wearing a mask either routinely or when traveling – unless you are sick, to reduce the risk of you transmitting the cause of your illness to others.

If I am potentially in contact with someone with Covid-19, can I get tested to avoid needing 14 days of isolation?

- Current recommendations are that irrespective of a negative test for Covid-19, if there remains the potential of exposure, isolation for 14 days remains the requirement.

What do I do if I am returning from overseas and want to train?

- Any athlete, coach or staff member who has returned from overseas should ensure that their return to training and attending any training centre has been agreed by the NSO leadership and Medical Director. Preferably this has been arranged in advance of travel, but if not, should be confirmed on return, prior to attending any HPSNZ facility.

