

# Situation Update - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## WHO Country Office for Nepal

### 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has announced 54 confirmed COVID-19 cases as of 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020.
- WHO Country Office fully repurposed for COVID-19 response with the activation of the Incident Management System.
- To expand testing facilities outside of the Kathmandu Valley, a total of 16 COVID-19 testing centers have been made functional for performing RT PCR tests in the provinces by MoHP.
- Weekly health cluster virtual meeting including the seven provincial teams was held for better planning, coordination and support to effectively respond to COVID-19 in the country.
- State health minister, Honorable Nawaraj Rawat and his team participated in the SAARC health minister level video conference to share country experiences, reviewing of the activities undertaken and the way forward for COVID-19 preparedness and response.
- MoHP participated in a video conference on COVID-19 information session organized by the WHO-HQ.
- As a part of ongoing WHO support on operations and logistics, WHO handed over various medical supplies to MoHP such as PPEs, gloves, surgical mask, protective goggles, gown and infrared thermometer. Other operation and logistics support included lab sample shipment and quality assurance through WHO CCs; primers and probes for lab testing; quantification of logistics requirements, specifications and procurement processes for all logistics required for public health interventions and clinical management.

#### SITUATION OVERVIEW

(reported up to 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020)

**54 confirmed**

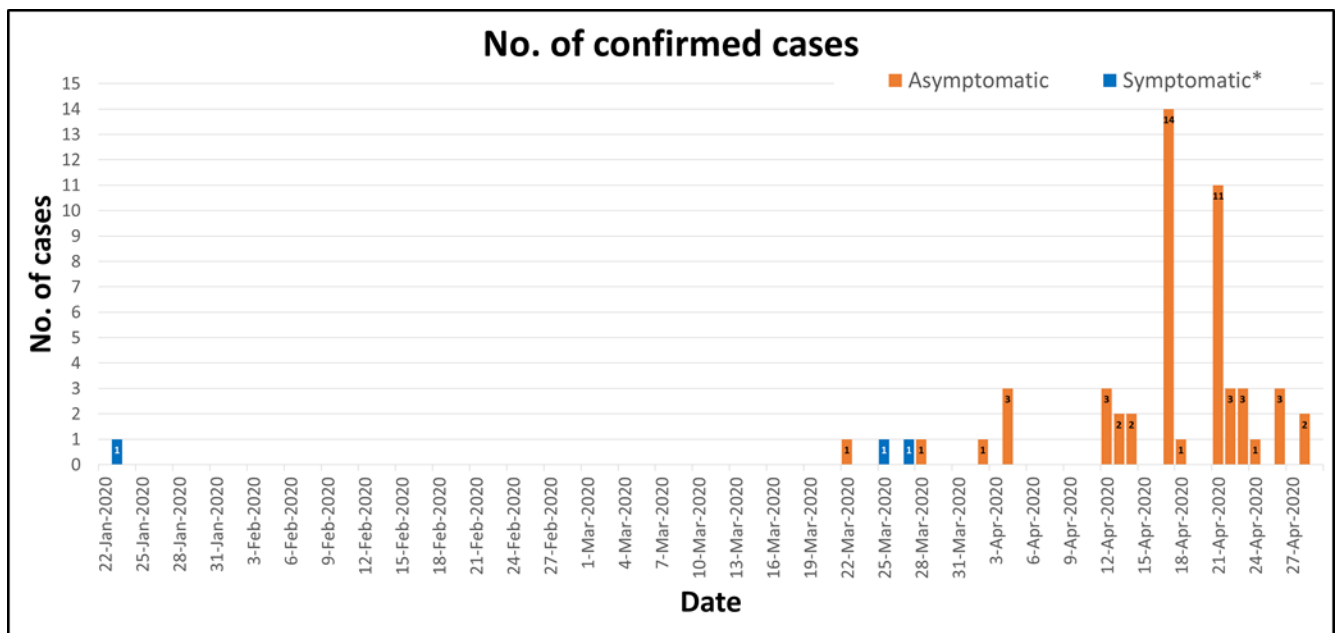
**0 deaths**

**16 recovered**

**10807 RT-PCR tests**

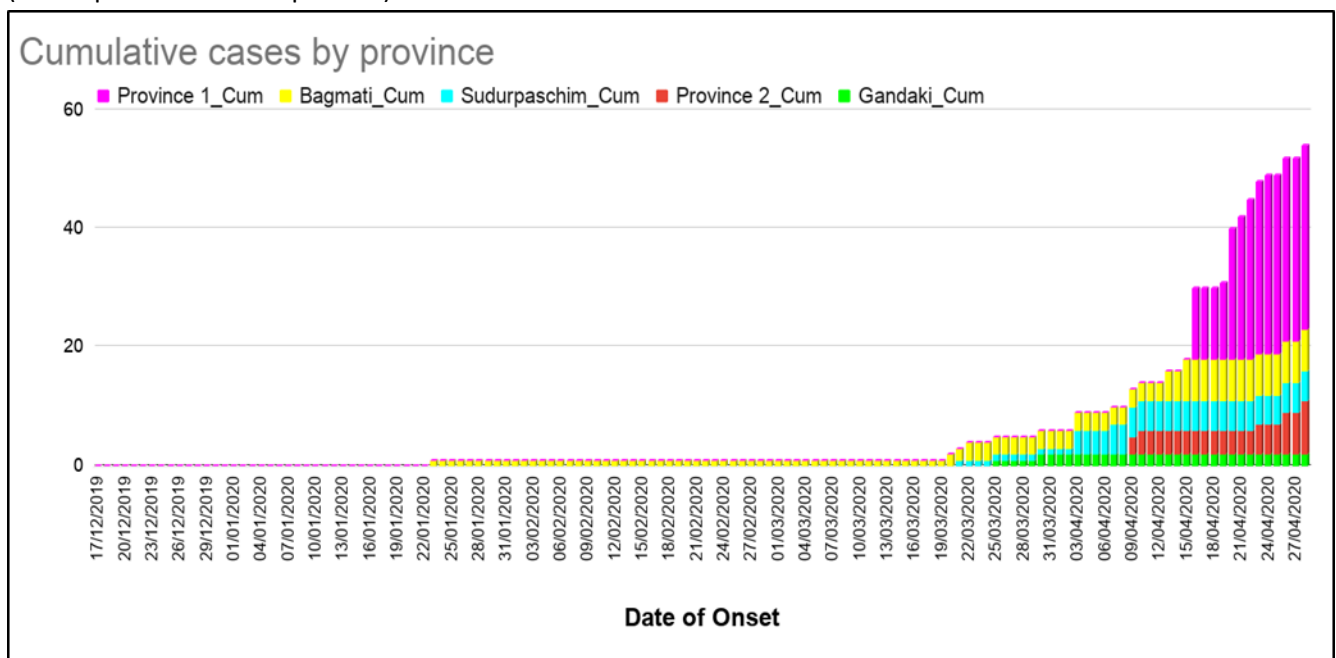
## EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

**Figure 1A: Epidemic curve of laboratory confirmed COVID-19, by date of diagnosis**  
(Data updated till 28<sup>th</sup> Apr 2020)



\*At the time of detection

**Figure 1B: Cumulative case count by province (complementing daily incidence shown above)**  
(Data updated till 28<sup>th</sup> Apr 2020)



**Note:** The first case contracted infection in December when he was in China.

**Table 1: Provinces with reported laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths.**

(Data updated till 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020)

Reporting Province	Total confirmed cumulative cases	Total cumulative deaths	Transmission classification*	Days since last reported case
Province 1	31	0	Cluster of cases	2
Province 2	9	0	Cluster of cases	0
Bagmati	7	0	Sporadic cases	11
Gandaki	2	0	Sporadic cases	26
Province 5	0	0	No cases	N/A
Karnali	0	0	No cases	N/A
Sudurpaschhim	5	0	Sporadic cases	15
<b>National Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>		

\* Case classification is based on [WHO transmission classification](#)

**No cases-** provinces with no cases

**Sporadic cases-** provinces with one or more cases, imported or locally detected

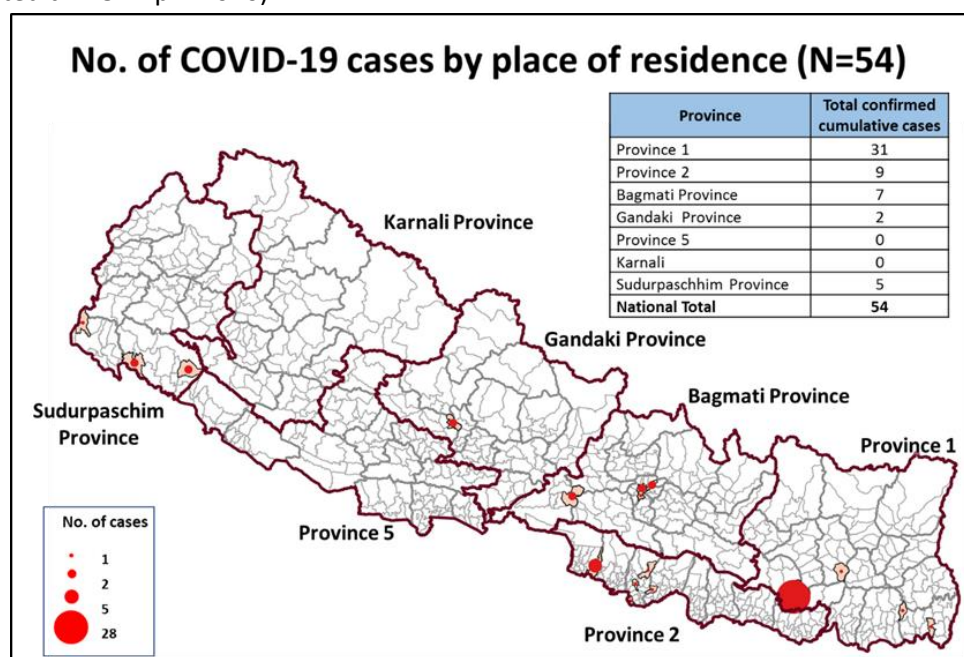
**Cluster of cases-** provinces experiencing cases, clustered in time, geographic location and/or by common exposures

**Community transmission-** experiencing larger outbreaks of local transmission defined through an assessment of factors including, but not limited to:

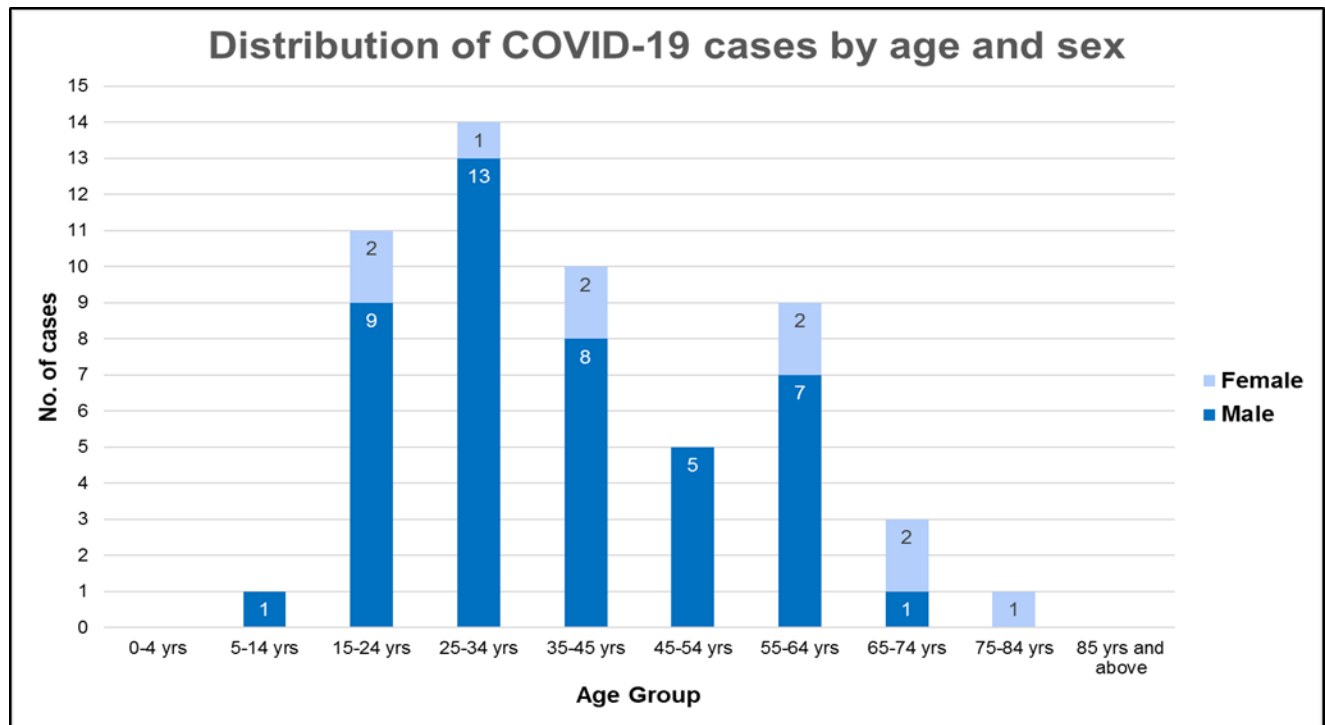
- Large numbers of cases not linkable to transmission chains
- Large numbers of cases from sentinel lab surveillance
- Multiple unrelated clusters in several areas of the country/territory/area

**Figure 2: Municipalities (by domicile) with reported laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases**

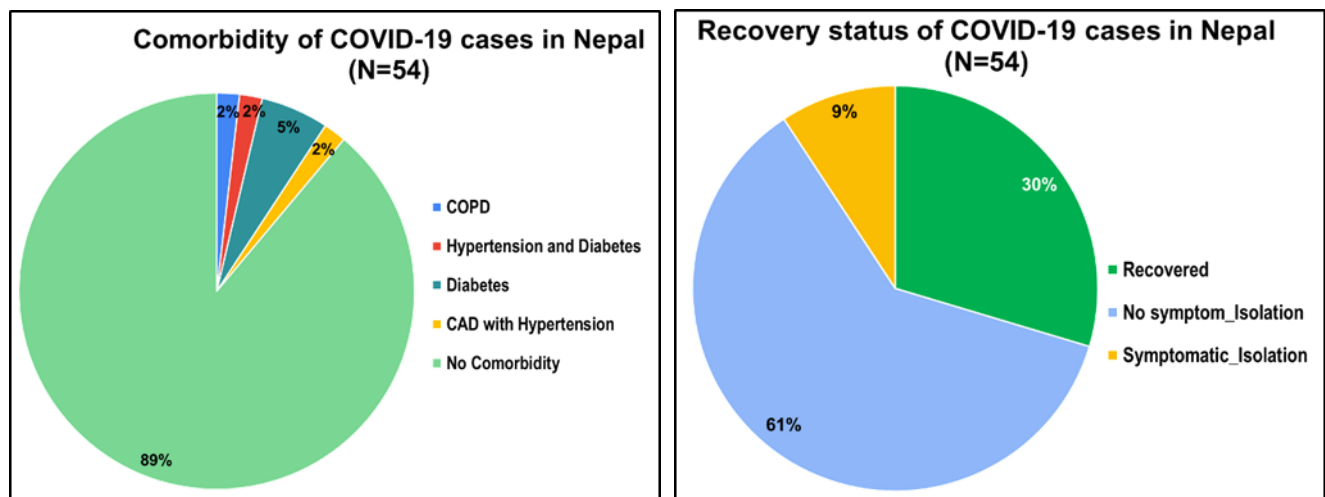
(Data updated till 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020)



**Figure 3: Epidemiological characteristics of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases**  
(data updated till 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020)



**Figure 4: Comorbidity and recovery status of COVID-19 cases in Nepal**  
(data updated till 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020)



## PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

### What Government of Nepal (GoN) and MoHP is doing?

- A high-level coordination committee for COVID-19 prevention and control in Nepal formed under the coordination of honorable deputy prime minister and defense minister on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020. High level inter-ministerial Committee chaired by Deputy Prime Minister has been re-structured as the Corona Crisis Management Centre (CCMC).
- Incident Command System of MOHP expanded to specifically address coordinated information management and operations research related issues.
- GoN, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, taking cognizance of the evolving global situation and recourse to the Infectious Disease Act 2020, decided to lockdown the country effective from 24<sup>th</sup> March until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The lockdown is now extended until 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020. International flights will remain suspended until 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020, except for emergency services, repatriation of expatriates and import of medical logistics and essential supplies.
- Prioritized and costed Health Response Plan for COVID-19 finalized for official endorsement.
- Joint rapid assessment protocol for designated hospitals readiness for IPC, Clinical Management, WASH and Health Care Waste Management approved for and pilot testing ongoing at Kathmandu.
- Additional tranches of medicines, medical logistics, PPE and equipment for COVID-19 response bought by government from China and some support from India and distributed to all provinces with inventory maintained using the Electronic Logistics Information Management System (E-LMIS)
- Regular dissemination of Sitreps by the Health Emergency Operations Center (HEOC); daily virtual press briefings by MoHP spokesperson; briefings to cluster partners and external development partners being done by relevant officials of the MOHP regularly.
- Province 4 and 7 have established toll-free COVID-19 hotlines through 1092 and 1148 respectively.
- To facilitate COVID- 19 prevention and response and strengthen contact tracing and testing, MoHP has formed and mobilized a team of 2 in municipality, 3 in sub metropolitan city and 5 in metropolitan city.
- Epidemiology and Disease Control Division, DoHS has published an interim [pocket book of clinical management of COVID-19 in health care setting and IPC pocket booklet](#). Likewise, 34 MD/MS resident doctors from National Academy of Medical Sciences have been mobilized to different parts of Sudurpaschhim to support COVID-19 management and response.
- Twenty-eight (28) various levels of hospitals were designated and prepared as COVID-19 hospitals, Thirteen (13) Level 1, Twelve (12) Level 2 and Three (3) Level 3
- To expand the COVID-19 testing facilities, the PCR testing sites have been expanded to 15 sites with at least one sites in each province
- An [interim guideline for the establishment and operationalization of molecular laboratory for COVID-19 testing in Nepal](#) has been released by MoHP. Private laboratories fulfilling the standards as mentioned in the guidelines can now perform the COVID-19 PCR tests after obtaining prior approval from MoHP.
- MoHP has released a [guideline on safety measures to be taken at the point of entry](#).

### **What is WHO Country Office for Nepal doing?**

- WHO Nepal is working closely with the MoHP COVID-19 preparedness and response in the country by providing technical guidance, sharing information on key developments and scientific updates.
- All technical and administrative staff of WHO Nepal have been re-purposed for COVID-19 response and several have been placed at different entities of the MoHP at national level; Provincial Health Officers, Surveillance Medical Officers, Field Medical Officers, Surveillance Associates and Information Management Assistants at the provincial level are supporting the Provincial Health Directorates in the COVID-19 response.
- Engaging with decision makers on formulating the strategic graduated step-down plan for transition from nation-wide lockdown.
- Supported MoHP in finalizing the COVID-19 Country Response Plan (awaiting formal approval).
- Facilitating protocols for operations research in therapeutic trials, sero-surveillance and transmission studies and enabling enrollment in WHO Solidarity trials; facilitating national prioritization of operations research for COVID-19.
- Health cluster expanded to include all seven provincial directors; WHO field staff in the provinces and central teams in the provinces led by directors. The WHO is the Health-Cluster co-lead. The Cluster meets virtually on a weekly basis.
- Support to the Department of Health Services and hospitals in the area of infection prevention control (IPC) and health facility preparedness by providing technical support on the development of standardized SOPs and guidelines; pocket book on IPC measures of COVID-19 in health care settings, guidelines for setting up isolation rooms in health facilities for COVID-19, SOP for decontamination and cleaning of ambulance used in COVID-19 and SOP for health care waste management in suspected case of COVID-19 including support to conduct rapid assessment of IPC, WASH, HCWM and clinical case management.
- Support to EDCCD on development and translation of various guidelines and SOP; pocket book of clinical management of COVID-19 in health care settings; psychological first aid; helping children to cope up with stress, coping with stress during COVID-19 outbreak; mental and psychosocial considerations during COVID-19 outbreak.
- Support to EDCCD and other surveillance and response actors of the MoHP in the areas of EWARS surveillance enhancement; development of guidelines, SOPs and forms for case investigation and contact tracing including training on their effective use, contextualization and development of web-based Go. Data tools for case investigation & contact tracing data management and training on their effective use; ongoing support for inter-linking of laboratory and epidemiological data to bring together the EWARS, National Influenza Center / NPHL and COVID-19 cases clinical, epidemiological and laboratory data.
- Direct financial contribution made to MoHP for Preparedness and Readiness to COVID-19 Pandemic for enhancing response capabilities.
- Support to NPHL on laboratory evaluation of COVID-19 diagnostic testing capability; development and finalization of national testing criteria for COVID-19; development plan for the use of GeneXpert in COVID-19 testing; over 15 country contextualized SOPs, guidelines, checklists and forms to NPHL for strengthening quality assured testing.

- RT-PCR kits for 2500 tests supplied to NPHL for enhancing response capabilities and request for supporting with additional kits has been made to regional office through WHO CO.
- Support to NHTC in translating four COVID-19 related training packages from Open WHO online courses into Nepali.
- Support to National Health Education Information Communication Center (NHEICC) for development, translation, validation and dissemination of various of risk communication materials (such as safe Ramadan practices in the context of COVID-19, risk communication package for health care facilities and COVID-19 frontline worker toolkit).
- Social Media Campaigns: Social media campaigns with UN agencies utilizing national influencers on relevant COVID-19 awareness and prevention measures. Launch of [WHO Nepal Facebook Page](#).
- Sensitization of the high-level officials of the MoHP on Crisis Communication initiated.
- UNCT Country Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19 awaiting government endorsement.
- WCO continually engaged in the crisis and response coordination of the UN with the WR co-chairing the CMT and UNCT/ HCT and regular briefing of the International Development Partners Group along with the UN RC.

#### **What partners are doing?**

- Partners are fully engaged in the COVID-19 response in a structured manner since the formal activation of the Health Cluster on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020, led by the IMS - MoHP and co-led by WHO.
- All information on partners' support is being channeled through one door mechanism - the COVID-19 Donor Coordination Matrix maintained by the Chair of the External Development Partners (EDP) and used as the single information source to track Health Cluster support.
- All sub-clusters of the Health Cluster are functioning with regular meetings and critical issues are being fed into the Health Cluster meeting for information and deliberation.
- All partners are working together to address the Key asks of the MoHP such as: testing, risk communication, procurement and supplies, case management support, one door information sharing, service continuity, integrated approaches, quarantine facilities, prevention of community transmission, etc. in coordinated manner.
- Government of India through the Indian Ambassador to Nepal has handed over 23 tons of medical supplies including 18 different types of medicines to MoHP in the presence of honorable minister of health and population.
- Similarly, the government of Tibet has handed over medical supplies such as PCR machine (2), infrared thermometer (1000), testing kits including VTMs (20,000), PPEs (10,000) and N95 masks (10,000) to MoHP. Testing kits with VTMs have been distributed to the provinces accordingly.

## WHO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

The overarching goal is to control the pandemic by slowing down the transmission and reducing mortality associated with COVID-19. The global strategic objectives are as follows:

- **Mobilize** all sectors and communities to ensure that every sector of government and society takes ownership of and participates in the response and in preventing cases through hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and individual-level physical distancing.
- **Control** sporadic cases & clusters and prevent community transmission by rapidly finding and isolating all cases, providing them with appropriate care, and tracing, quarantining, and supporting all contacts.
- **Suppress** community transmission through context-appropriate infection prevention and control measures, population level physical distancing measures, and appropriate and proportionate restrictions on non-essential domestic and international travel.
- **Reduce** mortality by providing appropriate clinical care for those affected by COVID-19, ensuring continuity of essential health & social services; protecting frontline workers & vulnerable populations.
- **Develop** safe and effective vaccines and therapeutics that can be delivered at scale and that are accessible based on need.

## RECOMMENDATION AND ADVICE FOR THE PUBLIC

If you are not in an area where COVID-19 is spreading or have not travelled from an area where COVID-19 is spreading or have not been in contact with a COVID-19 case, your risk of infection is low. It is understandable that you may feel anxious about the outbreak. Get the facts from reliable sources to help you accurately determine your risks so that you can take reasonable precautions. Seek guidance from WHO, your healthcare provider, your health authority or your employer for accurate information on COVID-19 and whether COVID-19 is circulating where you live. It is important to be informed of the situation and take appropriate measures to protect yourself and your family.

If you are in an area where there are cases of COVID-19, you need to take the risk of infection seriously. Follow the advice of WHO and guidance issued by national, provincial and local health authorities. For most people, COVID-19 infection will cause mild illness however, it can make some people very ill and, in some people, it can be fatal. Older people, and those with pre-existing medical conditions (such as cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease or diabetes) are at risk for severe disease.

For detailed information please visit the WHO [site](#).



## USEFUL LINKS

- Regular updates on MoHP Nepal's COVID-19 updates (including situation reports) and resources available [here](#)
- Algorithm to suspect COVID-19 infection based on WHO surveillance case definition can be found [here](#)
- For global WHO situation report, please visit this [site](#)
- Global coronavirus disease situation dashboard can be found [here](#)
- For information regarding coronavirus disease from WHO, please visit [here](#)
- Visit WHO Nepal webpage on COVID-19 [here](#); Facebook page [here](#).

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