As communicated last week, the UW-River Falls Student Health and Counseling Office will regularly share timely reminders and important updates regarding the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). As we are in the midst of flu season, guidance for general health and wellness will be communicated as well.

A comprehensive list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) is now available for reference on the Student Health and Counseling Office webpage. This resource is updated regularly and includes a breadth of information from travel warnings to health and wellness recommendations.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), UW Hospital and Clinics, the local health department, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have confirmed the first case of 2019 novel coronavirus in Wisconsin, in the Madison area. The case was confirmed at the CDC. The immediate health risk to the general public for contracting this virus is low. The patient is an adult with a history of travel to Beijing, China prior to becoming ill and was exposed to known cases while in China. The individual is isolated at home, and is doing well. Out of respect for the privacy of the patient and their household, this is the only information that is available.

It is important to know that there have been no changes to the recommendations for campus at this time. There are no suspected or reported cases of the coronavirus on campus and we remain unaware of any UW-River Falls personnel or students who have been exposed to the virus. We are continuously monitoring the situation and are staying in regular contact with our local, county and state health officials and following the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other public health officials.

We encourage you to familiarize yourself with preventive wellness efforts to avoid this and other viruses. These include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

The risk in the U.S. for the 2019 novel coronavirus remains low. Persons are much more likely to be at risk for influenza. Hence, we continue to recommend preventive measures (see above), including vaccination against influenza. Check with your health care provider about getting a flu shot. If you do have influenza-like symptoms, such as fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, and fatigue, contact your primary care provider and be sure to share any recent travel history or possible exposure.

Answers to questions related to the coronavirus or influenza can be found at CDC.gov. Clarification questions can be directed to Student Health and Counseling at 3293.

We ask that as a community, we support each other and never make assumptions due to anyone’s national origin or their recent travel. Remember that we are a community of respect, care and support where all members are celebrated and welcomed.

Thank you for your support.
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