

# NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: Oakwood Insurance Brokers

## Government Releases Report on Coronavirus Risks Within the UK

On 9th January 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reported the first discovery of the Wuhan novel coronavirus (WN-CoV). This particular coronavirus is associated with an outbreak of pneumonia in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and it is responsible for hundreds of illnesses and 17 deaths in China.

Since the initial outbreak, the WN-CoV has continued to spread. Countries with confirmed cases of WN-CoV include China, Taiwan, Thailand, Japan, South Korea and the US. There are currently no confirmed cases in the UK or of UK citizens abroad, according to a recent government [report](#).

Although the risk of getting WN-CoV in the UK is low, this outbreak is a rapidly evolving situation that should be taken seriously. Review the following article for an overview of coronaviruses and best practices for reducing your WN-CoV risks.

### What Is a Coronavirus?

According to health professionals, coronaviruses are common in animal species, and most don't affect humans. As of now, only seven different coronaviruses are known to infect humans. Human coronaviruses typically cause mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illness, and those affected exhibit flu-like symptoms. Symptoms can appear between two and 14 days after contracting the virus. The most common symptoms include:

- Headache
- Cough
- Tiredness
- Fever

Some human coronaviruses—including WN-CoV—can cause more severe complications. In these

cases, initial flu-like symptoms may progress into life-threatening conditions, including bronchitis and pneumonia. These complications are more common in people with weakened immune systems, such as the elderly, infants and those with long-term health conditions (eg diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease).

Because it is a new and evolving illness, health professionals cannot confirm exactly how the WN-CoV spreads from person to person. However, previous cases of human coronaviruses spread via contact with respiratory pathogens (eg sneezing and coughing). There is currently no vaccine or specific treatment for WN-CoV.

### Best Practices for Reducing WN-CoV Risks

While the risk of WN-CoV to the UK public is minimal, the government is continuing to work with the WHO to closely monitor the situation. In addition, the NHS released the following [best practices](#) for reducing WN-CoV risks:

- Avoid all but essential travel to Wuhan. If you must travel to the area, you should regularly wash your hands with soap and water, avoid visiting animal or bird markets, and restrict contact with anyone who appears ill.
- If you have returned from Wuhan in the last 14 days, stay indoors and avoid contact with other people. Contact NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travels. If you live in Northern Ireland, call your GP.

If a case of WN-CoV is confirmed in the UK, it will be announced as soon as possible by the Chief Medical Officer of the affected country.

