

From : Embassy of the State of Kuwait – Health Office – Washington

To : Kuwait Cultural Office – Washington, DC

Date : March 17, 2020

Subject : Coronavirus – COVID-19

We would like to thank you for your cooperation and efforts to comfort our dear students in the USA. The Health Office has made sure from the beginning of the Coronavirus outbreak around the world to make proper arrangements with Cigna health insurance to cover the costs of testing and treatment for any person infected with the virus since December 2019.

Below please find the latest medical guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19 that all students should follow. Coronavirus is one of the viruses endemic in both humans and animals causing many diseases, which range from the common cold to severe chest inflammation.

Possible ways of contracting Coronavirus:

- The virus is spread through secretions and respiratory droplets caused by sneezing or itching.
- A person is infected when these secretions or droplets come into contact with the mouth, nose or eyes, and are inhaled into the lungs by shaking hands or touching surfaces contaminated by the virus.
- The spraying of these secretions could be transmitted among individuals who are within a distance of 6 feet from each other.

Symptoms:

Symptoms are similar to severe Influenza such as:

- High temperature of more than 37.7 C or 99.9 F
- Coughing
- Shortness of breath
- Symptoms usually appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus

If you feel tired, have a sore throat or are coughing, does it mean that you are infected with Coronavirus?

Not at all. Infection symptoms with viruses and influenza are similar to those of coronavirus. Given this, precautions should be taken until you recover from the symptoms, and until your high temperature is back to a normal temperature for a period of 24 hours at least.

When should you go to the hospital?

In most cases, you should stay at home and not go to the hospital. However, when you start to experience the following symptoms, you must go to the hospital for medical care:

- Shortness of breath
- Feeling constant pain or discomfort in the chest area.
- Face and lips are turning blue.

Personal Prevention Methods:

Cleaning hands constantly:

- Wash your hands with soap and water constantly for at least for 20 seconds, especially after visiting public areas or after cleaning your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- If there is no soap and water, please use hand sanitizer which contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with hands that are unwashed.
- Throw away tissue paper after using it immediately.
- Maintain proper cleaning of everything you use constantly, such as the remote control, phone, door handles, etc...

Avoid Close Contact:

- Keep your distance from other people; and, avoid any social gathering and events even if people do not show any symptoms.
- In case of a virus outbreak, keep distance between yourself and others and do not socialize with anyone if you see that they have some symptoms.

If you feel that you have any of the symptoms mentioned above:

- Isolate yourself in a separate room with good ventilation and a private bathroom, if possible. This room should be separated from the house or apartment. Be cautious not to socialize with individuals in the house during the quarantine period.
- Wear a face mask when you are among other people.
- Keep your clothes and other personal belongings with you; and do not wash these items or share them with others.
- Keep washing your hands constantly and maintain good personal hygiene.
- Do not use spoons and dishes at home, rather use plastic utensils for each meal and discard them immediately after use.

What are the ways to treat oneself when feeling symptoms?

- Drink plenty of liquids. Eat fruits, vegetables, and healthy food.
- It is possible to take a pain killer like Tylenol with the proper dosage.
- It is OK to take medication for coughing. Use compresses and take a shower to reduce high temperature.

What shall I do in case of close contact with infected individuals?

According to U.S. hospital recommendations, the examination is only performed for individuals who are experiencing the infection symptoms listed above.

Is there a cure for Coronavirus?

Scientists have not found any effective treatment for the virus as of now. Scientific research is underway to develop an effective vaccine that protects against the virus. Also, there is a huge effort to develop an antiviral drug.

Should I wear a face mask?

Medical authorities have not recommended wearing a face mask, unless an individual has been infected with the virus, has the symptoms listed above or has been in close contact with infected individuals.

Am I permitted to travel?

Travel inside or outside the United States must be restricted, unless there is an urgent need.

Am I allowed to leave my house?

Going outside of your home should be restricted to just meeting your basic needs, for example getting your groceries. It is recommended that you buy whatever you need through the Internet, if possible. Avoid using public transportation or being outside for any unnecessary reasons as much as you can.

Can I use Cigna Insurance as a student?

An agreement has been made with Cigna to cover the costs of all diagnosis needed, tests, and treatment for all infected students since December 2019.

What should I do when I need help or medical advice?

All students can contact the Cigna hotline which is available 24 hours a day or use the Cigna mobile app.

Hotline: 1-866-912-1687.

Can I get a consultation from a doctor without going to the hospital?

In order to save students' time and to avoid any exposure to infected individuals in hospitals or urgent care centers, an agreement has been made between the health office and Cigna to provide medical advice remotely. The student can get a remote consultation from a doctor who specializes in coronavirus related concerns. This can be done through a video conference call in which symptoms are discussed and proper medical advice is provided without leaving your home.

How can I do remote consultation?

All registered students with Cigna health insurance can get this remote consultation through their website shown below:

My.cigna.com , then (connect Now)

Is there a limit to our health insurance benefits?

NO. All students are fully covered for general treatments and surgeries since 2015.

In conclusion, we are sending all of you our best wishes to remain healthy and safe during this period of time. If you have questions or concerns, please call the Health Office hotline at 202-320-2415 or use WhatsApp to get in touch with the Health Office. You can also follow our twitter account (@KHO_USA) for any urgent announcements.