



health

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



NATIONAL HEALTH  
LABORATORY SERVICE



## COVID-19

### TRAVEL ADVISORY

#### Key points

- **Travelers should avoid all nonessential travel to countries affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.**
- Chinese officials have closed transport within and out of Wuhan and other areas in Hubei Province, including buses, subways, trains, and the international airport.
- Preliminary information suggests that older adults and people with underlying health conditions may be at increased risk for severe disease from this virus.
- The situation is evolving. This notice will be updated as more information becomes available.

#### What is the current situation?

##### No travel ban to affected countries

- South Africa is not recommending any ban for travelling to China or other countries affected by COVID-19. Based on the currently available information before us, we are satisfied that the Chinese health authorities are doing everything in their power to contain the spread the disease. On such matters, we are guided by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and International Health Regulations (2005).
- **However it is recommended that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to countries affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.**
- There may be limited access to adequate medical care in affected areas.

#### Signs and symptoms

Signs and symptoms of this illness include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. COVID-19 has the potential to cause severe disease and death.

#### Who is at risk

Preliminary information suggests older adults and people with underlying health conditions or compromised immune systems may be at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

On arrival to South Africa, travelers from affected countries may undergo health screening, including having their temperature taken and being asked to fill out a symptom questionnaire. Travelers with signs and symptoms of illness (fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) will have an additional health assessment.

## What can travelers do to protect themselves and others?

If you must travel:

- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available.
- Older adults and travelers with underlying health issues may be at risk for more severe disease and should discuss travel to affected countries with their healthcare provider.

If you traveled to an affected country in the last 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should:

- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel while sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available.