



Laredo Health Department



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

2600 Cedar Ave., P.O. Box 2337, Laredo, TX 78044  
Tel. (956) 795-4900 Fax. (956) 795-4953

Hector F. Gonzalez, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director of Health

Date: March 3, 2020  
To: Public  
From: City of Laredo Health Department  
Through: Hector Gonzalez, MD, M.P.H., Health Director  
Subject: **Novel Coronavirus Update**

---

**The City of Laredo Health Department** wants the public to know that even though San Antonio has a local public health emergency declaration there is no cause for alarm to Laredoans. At this time the new **Coronavirus/CV (COVID-19) continues to be another corona virus that causes a cold like illness that may cause a lower respiratory infection.**

Furthermore, there is no local transmission in Texas, San Antonio or Laredo, all the cases in San Antonio were travel related or from the Diamond Cruise Ship; they are not cases from San Antonio. For Laredoans that may have been at the mall in San Antonio this weekend exposure is at very low risk or none at all. While we don't know all the reasons for the declaration and the exact condition of the person, most persons exposed recover well -- **over 80% have mild symptoms** or are asymptomatic. It is those persons with underlying health conditions and/or elderly that may complicate (most of the sever cases and deaths are elderly and confined to outbreak areas). It is those vulnerable populations (elderly, children under 5 years, those with underlying conditions, pregnant women and those with special needs) that are most at risk of potential complications. Therefore, we have and continue to alert medical personnel, hospitals, and first responders to be ready to address as we are already addressing other respiratory infections (flu, throat and ear infections, etc.).

At some point we will have COVID-19 worldwide, in the United States and in our communities but based on what we know it will be another corona virus.

At this time **COVID-19** continues to cause a *cold-like respiratory* infection:

- fever, cough and may develop shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear within 2 to 14 days after exposure.
- may exhibit lower respiratory symptoms (bronchitis, pneumonia).

While CDC has issued an alert to prepare for local transmission and we are, this is a novel virus that is still evolving and we will continue to monitor and keep you abreast of any change or new information. But at this time it is acting like a seasonal cold like virus. If we get local COVID-19 transmission in the United states or in our cities- **Will this be more severe? Not necessarily since over 80% have mild symptoms** or none at all and will recover.

#### **What we know about COVID-19?**

- At this time, it is acting like another cold-like virus
- There is no local transmission (we do have season CV that we have every year, this is not covid-19)

*For more information and reporting, please contact the Epidemiology Division at 956-795-4951.*



Laredo Health Department



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

2600 Cedar Ave., P.O. Box 2337, Laredo, TX 78044  
Tel. (956) 795-4900 Fax. (956) 795-4953

Hector F. Gonzalez, M.D., M.P.H  
Director of Health

- Over 80% with Covid -19 have mild symptoms or none at all and recover.
- We will most likely have more cases in the US and in Texas

We must continue to promote respiratory precautions due to high levels of flu this season as shown below. We want the public to know there are no plans for school closings, public gatherings etc.

**Current Flu data:**

Laredo, Texas Influenza (Flu) 2019-2020			
Confirmed Flu Cases	Confirmed Influenza Like Illness (ILI)	Flu Adult Deaths	Flu Pediatric Deaths
4,500	21,000	10+	1

**Over 100 children have died of flu in the United States this year**

COVID-19 December 2019 to Present	
Global Confirmed Cases	Global Confirmed Deaths
80,000+	2,628

**Prevention**

- Report any Chinese travel history within 14 days of travel to mainland China for persons with cold-like and respiratory symptoms.
- ***Follow general respiratory precautions:***
  - Wash your hands often and correctly
  - Cough into your elbow, cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing and Don't touch mouth, eyes and nose without washing hands
  - We advise all, regardless of previous flu illness, to get vaccinated against the 2019-2020 flu and those over 65 years of age to get their pneumonia vaccine as well.
  - If you are sick stay home and call your doctor

*For more information and reporting, please contact the Epidemiology Division at 956-795-4951.*