

Travel Tips: Traveling During the Coronavirus Outbreak



By Mario Martinez

COVID-19, better known as coronavirus, has been prompting major changes around the world in order to combat the illness and stop it from spreading. Many events have been cancelled or suspended in response to the virus outbreak. In fact, the World Health Organization recently classified the outbreak as a “pandemic” and called on countries to take the appropriate measures in responding to it.

With all of this mind, you may be

wondering how will this affect your travel plans and what precautions you can take to stay safe. Let's take time to address all those issues and concerns with travel tips for our current state of affairs:

1. Symptoms

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has listed the following as the main symptoms of coronavirus, which may appear anywhere from 2-14 days after exposure:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Additional symptoms may include difficulty breathing, sore throat, pain or pressure in the chest, bluish lips or face, diarrhea, fatigue and headaches. If you have these symptoms or are just generally feeling unwell, you should try your best to avoid any travel and isolate yourself from others. You should also call your doctor and set up an appointment. But, do not go to the doctor unannounced, as that may spread the illness.

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2. How to Protect Yourself

As there is currently no vaccine for coronavirus, it's extra important to take steps in preventing the spread of the illness. The virus spreads by person-to-person contact, primarily by being around when an infected person sneezes or coughs. This is why many governments are encouraging or

enforcing social distancing and isolation, especially if you live or have been in a place with an outbreak. As part of that, avoiding any unessential travel is key.

Besides that, you should frequently wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after being in public and after coughing or sneezing. Using hand sanitizer works, too, but washing your hands is preferred. Also, when coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth or nose with a tissue, or use the inside of your elbow.

Cleaning surfaces (tables, toilets, door knobs etc.) daily is also recommended by the CDC. Specifically, using household disinfectant, alcohol solutions and or bleach is advised.

Wearing a facemask has become a prominent trend, but you should only wear one if you have shown symptoms or are caring for someone who is sick. Face masks are in short supply and should be prioritized for the sick and caregivers.

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3. Traveling

The CDC states that all nonessential travel to destinations with ongoing outbreaks should be avoided. Currently that includes: China, Iran, South Korea and most of Europe. This recommendation is especially important for elderly people and those with chronic medical conditions, as they are at a higher risk for the illness.

The Federal Government has already put some travel bans into place, and there will likely be more coming our way. Many airports are canceling or limiting flights to and from countries undergoing outbreaks. In addition, many airports are allowing travelers to reschedule or cancel their flights free of charge. Major hotel chains are also waiving their cancellation fees during this time, along with ground

transportation groups like Amtrak and Greyhound

In terms of public transportation, services like the MTA are still running, with many subway and train stations seeing enhanced cleaning measures. However, due to how close you are to other people while on buses and subways, it is advised that you try to avoid using public transportation. Services like Uber and Lyft should be avoided for similar reasons. But if you do, follow the safety precautions described above.

The bottom line is that during the coronavirus pandemic all unnecessary travel should be avoided. With many corporations allowing their employees to work from home and schools moving to online classes, the steps are being made to stop the spread of this virus. If you are traveling in or have traveled in any of the countries undergoing outbreaks, it's important to take the proper steps in self quarantining and seeking a doctor if you have symptoms. While it is easy to be afraid of what is currently happening, by taking the right steps, we can all work together to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Information from reporter [Stephanie Asymkos](#) and the [CDC](#) were used for this article.