

CORONAVIRUS

New coronavirus cases confirmed in Snohomish, King counties

A King County woman in her 50s and a teen in Mill Creek were diagnosed with coronavirus.

Author: Allison Sundell

Published: 7:48 PM PST February 28, 2020

Updated: 10:38 AM PST March 1, 2020

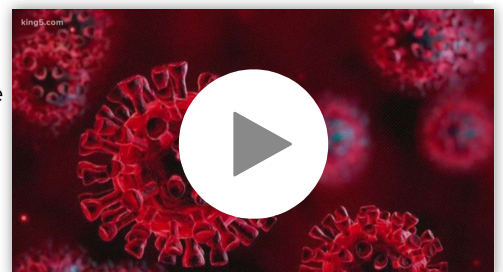


SHORELINE, Wash. — Four more people have been diagnosed with the [2019 novel coronavirus](#) (COVID-19) since Friday night.

The patients are a student at Henry M. Jackson High School in Mill Creek, two men in their 60s and a King County woman in her 50s, who recently traveled to Daegu, South Korea.

"I can appreciate the news tonight can be distressing to our community," said Dr. Chris Spitters, health officer at Snohomish Health District. "The most important thing we can do is to remain calm and prepared and informed."

The cases are "presumptive positives," meaning the tests came back positive from the state Public Health Laboratory and await confirmation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



Snohomish County case

The student had not recently traveled internationally and is believed to have contracted coronavirus in the community, according to Dr. Kathy Lofy, state health officer at the Washington State Department of Health.

The teen boy fell ill Monday with body aches, fever and a headache and was seen at two health clinics in Snohomish County, including Seattle Children's North Clinic on Monday.

The student felt well enough to go back to school Friday and tried to go to class. However, that student's test came back positive, and he returned home when the health department notified the school, according Spitters.



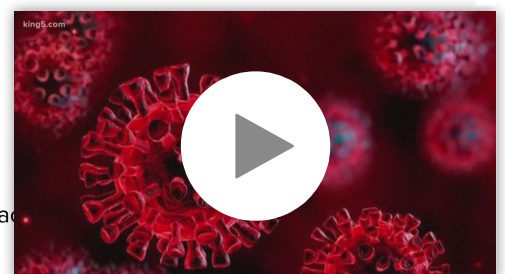
Spitters said the student is in home isolation and is "doing well."

The student's family released a statement Saturday saying they are "taking this situation very seriously."

"Our child became ill with flu-like symptoms on Monday morning. We took the necessary steps to have him seen by medical professionals and to be tested for the flu. We didn't learn of the testing of COVID-19 until Friday morning, after our now symptom-free child left for school. He promptly returned home before school started. We are taking this situation very seriously. Please know that we have been following all guidance and instructions from both the healthcare providers that treated our son, as well as the Snohomish Health District. We understand the concerns and anxiety raised, but we ask that the community and media please respect our family's privacy."

Staff notified "a small number" of students who came in contact with the infected student, and they will stay home for 14 days, according to Spitters. The teen has not been in class since he started showing symptoms, which health officials say is when coronavirus is believed to be most contagious.

The health department is working to notify any health workers who may have come in contact with the teen.



Everett School District Superintendent Dr. Ian Saltzman said as of right now, no other students have exhibited symptoms.

"First of all, as a community, as a country, we need to take this very seriously. To our local community, to our parents, just watch the symptoms. If there's anything you have questions about, go to your local doctor. Remind your students-- wash your hands, cover your mouth, cover your nose. But if you have those symptoms, go to your doctor. As a district, we will keep our community informed. We are concerned like everybody else about this," Saltzman said.

Everett Public Schools plans to sanitize the Jackson High School campus over the weekend, and the school will be closed Monday. Custodians were told to make sure classrooms have cleaner to wipe down surfaces and stock extra gloves and cleaning supplies, according to the district.

The student has a sibling at Gateway Middle School, who is not showing symptoms, but will be tested and quarantined until results come back, according to Everett Public Schools.

King County cases

There are now 6 confirmed cases of the coronavirus in King County.

The latest were two men in their 60s, both at different hospitals.

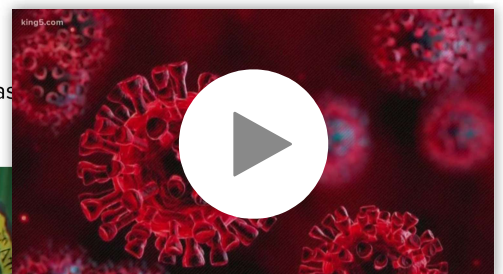
One man is hospitalized at Valley Medical Center in Renton and the other at Virginia Mason Medical Center. Both have underlying health conditions.

A woman who was infected visited South Korea between Feb. 7-23. She worked one day Tuesday but did not come in contact with the public, according to Dr. Jeff Duchin, health officer of Public Health Seattle & King County.

That woman noticed symptoms at the end of the workday Tuesday, including fever, nausea, coughing and a sore throat. Her husband notified the health department of her travel history Wednesday, and she was tested Thursday.

She didn't need medical care and is recovering, according to Duchin.

The woman's husband, who did not travel to South Korea but has been in the same house as her, is under quarantine.





Health officers are still investigating each patient's contacts. Because the Mill Creek teen had not recently traveled and acquired the virus through the community, officers will interview him to see if he was in contact with anyone who had recently traveled.

Officers speculated it was possible the virus transmitted through someone who had mild symptoms and didn't realize they had coronavirus.

"We really believe that the risk at this point is increasing," Lofy said.

Officers stressed that as the health department tests more individuals, they expect to see more cases that aren't acquired through the traditional pathway of travel from China.

"People shouldn't be scared of that," Duchin said. "People should understand this disease is likely to increase as it has in other countries, that it's predominantly a mild illness, although in some people it can be severe. There are things we can do to decrease our risk, and that's really what we should be focusing on."

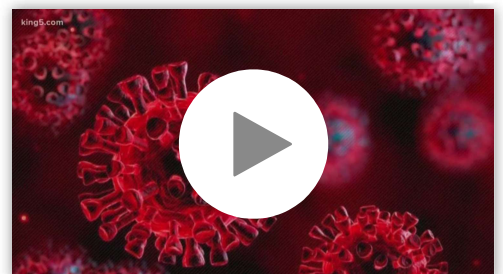
Duchin said the public should focus on proper hand hygiene, such as washing hands frequently and avoiding touching your face and eyes, staying home from school and work when sick and cleaning frequently touched objects.

As of Friday, the state health lab [can now test](#) for 2019 novel coronavirus, allowing people who are being monitored to get their results faster.

RELATED: [Seattle-based companies skip conferences over coronavirus concerns](#)

Washington state has tested 37 people for coronavirus. Twenty-nine of those tests came back negative, and five are still pending.

Until now, just one case came back positive – a Snohomish County man was the [first person in the U.S.](#) to be diagnosed with this strain of coronavirus. The 35-year-old man was admitted to Providence Medical Center in Everett on Jan. 20 after returning from a visit to China.



He has since [fully recovered](#) and was released from isolation.

The state is also monitoring 294 people who are at risk of being exposed to coronavirus, as of Friday afternoon.

Bothell High School [closed Thursday and Friday](#) due to coronavirus concerns. A high school staff member's family member fell ill this week after traveling internationally, prompting the district to close the school out of an abundance of caution. That family member's test came back negative Friday.

