

Latest information provided by the OIE Delegate for the People's Republic China on 5 February 2020

1. Have any investigations (epidemiological or laboratory) been carried out to investigate the animal or environmental source of the virus?

According to investigations conducted by the Chinese health department, most of the early human cases originated from a wild animal market in Wuhan, and the 2019-novel Coronavirus Virus strain (2019-nCoV) that caused the human epidemic was isolated in environmental samples collected from the market. At present, investigations are carrying out to trace the species of wild animal from which the virus originated.

After the detection of human cases, veterinary departments of China have carried out 2019-nCoV testing towards samples of pigs, poultry and dogs and other domestic animal animals collected since 2019 (mainly in late 2019). So far, results of such testing are all negative. Molecular epidemiology analysis indicates the first published sequence of 2019-nCoV (WH-Human 1/China/2019-Dec) released by the Chinese Health Department shows high homology (87.99%) to bat-derived coronavirus, and low homology (lower than 66%) to the whole genome of domestic animal-derived coronavirus (such as IBV, PEDV, TGEV, etc.)

2. Is there any ongoing monitoring plan in animals for the detection of the new virus?

For many years, Veterinary services of China have been carrying out surveillance towards avian-derived coronaviruses such as Avian Infectious Bronchitis Virus, swine-derived coronaviruses such as Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Virus, and domestic animal derived coronaviruses such as mink coronavirus, in order to monitor the infection of livestock and avian for coronavirus.

3. Did you isolate the virus from some non- human hosts? If so from what species or samples?

Chinese health and veterinary departments have launched a joint project to trace back the source of the 2019-nCoV. So far, the virus has not been isolated from non-human hosts.

4. Is there any evidence of the transmission of the virus between animals and humans?

According to results of investigations made by the Health Departments of China, it's quite highly possible that the 2019-nCoV derives from wild animals. The Chinese Health and Veterinary Departments have jointly launched researches on this subject. So far, it is still not possible to confirm whether the virus can be transmitted from humans to domestic animals or whether domestic animals can be infected and spread to each other.

In addition, while scientifically responding to human epidemics, relevant Chinese authorities have strengthened wildlife supervision, as well as prevention and control of major animal diseases. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the State Administration for Market Regulation, and the State Forestry and Grassland Administration have jointly issued notices and announcements to strengthen the prevention and control of wildlife diseases, and prohibit illegal wildlife trade. Continuous efforts will be made to effectively prevent and control major animal diseases such as African swine fever and highly pathogenic Avian Influenza. At present, the situation of major animal epidemics in the country is generally stable.