

## The New Coronavirus – Do Mosquitoes Spread it?

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The Novel Coronavirus, known as COVID-19, was first identified in Wuhan, China and has since spread rapidly, killing hundreds and sickening thousands. This virus is newly identified and is not the same as the coronaviruses that circulate among humans and cause mild disease, such as the common cold. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some of which cause illness in humans while others circulate among animals such as cattle, cats, camels and bats. SARS, a coronavirus that emerged to infect people, came from civet cats while another coronavirus, MERS, infected people from camels.

Although COVID-19 likely came from an animal, it now appears to be spreading person-to-person. **There is no evidence whatsoever that any coronavirus is spread by mosquito bite.** But what, exactly, is ‘person-to-person’ transmission? This occurs mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and common colds are spread. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or may even be inhaled into the lungs. Usually this happens within about 6 feet. Also, note that some viruses are highly contagious (such as measles) while others are less so. We still have much to learn about just how contagious COVID-19 is as well as many other aspects of its epidemiology.

Now, if a mosquito bites a person who has Zika virus in the bloodstream, that mosquito may then be able to transmit the virus to another person in about 10 days or so. However, this is NOT considered ‘person-to-person’ transmission. In this case, the virus is ‘vector borne’, meaning transmitted by a biting arthropod such as a mosquito or tick.

Here are just a few other things to know about COVID-19:

- CDC does **not** recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory viruses.
- Coronaviruses are poor survivors on exposed surfaces. Therefore, there is likely a very low risk of spread from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient temperatures.
- There is no reason to think that any animals or pets in the United States might be a source of infection for COVID-19.
- There is currently no vaccine for COVID-19 and no specific antiviral treatment.
- One of the most effective preventive measures is to wash your hands often, with soap, for at least 20 seconds especially after using the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

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<sup>1</sup>Not only is Captain Stan The Mosquito Man, he also holds a PhD in Public Health, with emphasis in Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases.

<sup>2</sup>This information was adapted primarily from [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), the official website of the Centers For Disease Control And Prevention. The COVID-19 situation is changing daily so please consult this website for update.