Coronavirus Q&A - Orange County Health Care Agency

How close are scientists to having a vaccine? Will a vaccine be available? When?
It is estimated to be about a year before a vaccine will be developed. This is an approximation and can be longer.

For how long does COVID-19 survive outside of a host?
The virus is said to survive outside the host for a few hours to a few days. It is truly not known. The best recommendation is routine disinfection.

What is the likelihood that it could survive and be transmitted in water?
It is unlikely that COVID-19 is transmittable by water. Additionally, the dilution effect is seen as a benefit when considering COVID-19 and other constituents of concern.

If the pandemic spreads out locally, would that be considered a disaster where we, as Disaster Service Workers, will be required to step up and help? Or is that for medical personnel?
Local Health Emergency and Public Health Emergency is different than a Public Safety Official disaster.

What age and health profile is that of the typical person who has succumbed to the virus?
Most of the deaths are the elderly and considered to be at an increased risk. Additionally, those with compromised immune systems are also considered to be at risk.

If you don’t show symptoms can you still be a carrier for the virus?
This is possible. You could be asymptomatic (not showing signs) and be a carrier of the COVID-19.

When is it advisable to get testing, what should we look out for and where do we get tested?
The signs vary from person to person. If you feel that you are possibly sick, stay home and call your doctor. Additional information can be found on MyOCSD, the Center for Disease Control.

What common cleaners work on the Novel Coronavirus?
Most common household cleaners seem to be effective. Follow the direction on the packaging when using the products to clean and disinfect.
Do UV air filters work to kill the Novel Coronavirus?
UV works for water. Unfortunately, this is currently not known for air filters. The Health Care Agency will have to research this further. However, this virus does not appear to be very durable.

How can we protect ourselves when using a public restroom?
The best advice is to continually wash your hands.

I read somewhere that children do not seem to be catching coronavirus. Do we know why? Can they still be carriers of the virus?
Children seem to be the least susceptible to the virus. There is not enough data for us to know why this is the case.

What are the early symptoms of COVID-19? Discrepancies between it being fever with dry cough or very similar to the flu (fever with body aches and a cough develops later). Are there common early symptoms that we should be looking out for, or does it vary by person, and what are they?
The symptoms vary person to person. If you or someone you know is ill ask them to go home, self-quarantine and call their doctor. For a full description of the symptoms, visit the Center for Disease Control.

Is there any data showing how soon after exposure a person becomes contagious? Are they immediately contagious or is a person only contagious after they start showing symptoms?
The virus can survive outside the host for a few hours to a few days. It is truly not known how long the virus can survive. Even if a person is asymptomatic, they can still be a carrier of the COVID-19. The recommendation is to routinely disinfectant your surroundings.

If children or other family members are sick at home, should you also stay home from work for risk of bringing the virus with you into the office or is only a risk if you are also showing symptoms?
If you come in direct contact with someone who has COVID-19, it is recommended that you self-quarantine for 14-days.

Should we issue travel restrictions?
At this time, travel restriction only applies to the countries that have the current restrictions. The Health Care Agency does not currently have any additional recommendation on this. However, this is an issue that we will be looking at on a daily basis and will reevaluate as the situation progresses.
What has the County of Orange issued to their employees regarding this virus, restrictions, alternative work options?
The Health Care Agency has not provided alternative work recommendations. They recommend following the guidance provided from the Center for Disease Control. Most importantly continue to wash your hands and stay home if you are sick.