The National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health is closely monitoring guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concerning the outbreak of a respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus ("COVID-19") that was first detected in China and which has now been detected in almost 70 locations internationally, including in the United States.

On January 31, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency (PHE) for the United States to aid the nation’s healthcare community in responding to COVID-19. The CDC is monitoring this situation and issues daily updates on its website. NPWH recommends members check the CDC website frequently.

The CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick; stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
  - The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

If you have not gotten a flu shot, it’s not too late to do so.

**Pregnant and lactating women**

There is no current information from published scientific reports about the susceptibility of pregnant women to COVID-19. Pregnant women experience immunologic and physiologic changes which might make them more susceptible to viral respiratory infections, including COVID-19. To find the most up to date information about pregnancy and lactation and COVID-19 visit the CDC webpages with specific recommendations for pregnant women, in-patient obstetric care, and breastfeeding.