

Preventative Measures related to the Health Situation caused by the Outbreak of the Coronavirus (Sars-CoV-2 - Covid-19)

The outbreak in China of the virus called Sars-CoV-2 and the resulting disease Covid-19 (“coronavirus”) and the increasing number of cases being reported worldwide, in particular South Korea and Northern Italy, show that it is very difficult to contain. The virus is apparently easily transmissible via infected individuals with symptoms and evidence indicating that coronavirus can be transmitted even by seemingly healthy individuals who are actually carriers. National health authorities may provide different recommendations on how to prevent spread of new infections.

The World Rowing Federation (FISA) strongly encourages each National Rowing Federation to guide their athletes and support personnel on how to avoid exposure to coronavirus. Such guidance should follow recommendations promoted by official health authorities such as the World Health Organisation (WHO). The virus has spread globally and requires significant effort by all to contain it. Simple actions may be effective to limit the spread of the virus, as is seen with the common influenza infection.

The basic rules to avoid infection are:

- **wash your hands with soap regularly and thoroughly,**
- **avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands,**
- **stay at least two metres away from infected people or people showing symptoms (like coughing), and**
- **avoid mass gatherings**

Provided below are general recommendations:

Prevention

1. Each person should adopt the same preventive measures used against the transmission of virus influenza, since coronavirus follows classical dissemination over airways and is spread by contaminated surfaces.
2. Hands should be regularly washed with soap and water (30 sec), then disinfected with alcoholic disinfectant. This is especially important before all meals, particularly when food is served in buffet style (the serving cutlery should not be interchanged and at buffets, staff should assist with serving).
3. Athletes should only attend training, meals, travel and meetings with clean and dry clothing. Rooms should be ventilated regularly.
4. In training camps, daily cleaning of all facilities and maintaining hygiene is critical. Washrooms, toilets and door handles should be disinfected daily. Laundry services should be available. During travel, face masks may not adequately protect against infection. Some teams recommend disinfection of the seat tray-table on the plane. Small bottles with alcoholic disinfectant should be carried by each team member.
5. A varied, vitamin-rich diet with sufficient fruit and vegetables helps prevent infections. Fruit containing vitamin C, such as oranges and grapefruit, are particularly important. Team members should also drink enough water to keep mucous membranes moist.

If team members feel sick

6. If fever and fatigue occur, athletes should take a break from training and consult their team doctor.
7. Athletes and support personnel showing symptoms should be separated from the rest of the team, avoid contact with other team members, be separated for meals, and

should carefully disinfect their hands regularly. They should wear a face mask during acute symptoms. The separation should continue for 2-3 days after the actual signs of infection have subsided and should be at the discretion of the attending doctor. It is wise to have separate toilets for such athletes to break the transmission of other viruses like Norovirus.

How can I exclude Coronavirus (Sars-CoV-2 / COVID-19) infection?

8. If there has been no contact with someone who travelled to affected regions, the probability of infection by coronavirus is low.
9. Most infections with coronavirus are mild, but more severe complications may arise, particularly in older and immune-compromised people.
10. Coronavirus infection should be considered a possible cause of infection in acute respiratory illness, by the medical doctor.
11. Athletes and support personnel **who are ill and had contact** with someone who travelled to affected regions should seek medical advice in a public health office where coronavirus can be tested. For such persons, a 14-day-quarantine might be useful. At the end of this quarantine, the coronavirus should be tested again, before including them in the normal routine.
12. Transmission time appears to be 14 days; during that time an infected person may transmit the virus to others, even if there are no clinical signs of infection. During this asymptomatic period the virus may not be detectable by the test.

Possibility and need of vaccination?

13. FISA recommends vaccination **with quadrivalent flu vaccines** against viral influenza for athletes and support personnel. This decreases the likelihood of viral influenza significantly. Flu vaccination with the vaccines commonly used is effective and is generally very well tolerated. A vaccination is most effective if provided in due time before risk of influenza virus is expected to increase (northern hemisphere in November, southern hemisphere in June). Consider Tamiflu if influenza virus infection manifests.
14. The vaccination should be arranged so that no exhaustive training has taken place the day before and the following day is as free of training as possible. It should also be noted that the full effect of the vaccination is only fully developed after 2-3 weeks. Other viral infections can still cause illness.
15. The decision to vaccinate must take into account the current state of health, previous illnesses, medication, and the vaccination history of each individual.
16. There is no vaccination presently available for coronavirus.

Where is information available?

FISA, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) are regularly assessing all information available. The following webpages are kept up to date with the most recent international information:

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

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