

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Prevention Measures

March 2, 2020

Owing to the spread of the new coronavirus, the Japanese government has requested that elementary and junior high schools throughout Japan be closed temporarily. Furthermore, in Hokkaido, a state of emergency was declared, which is due to last until March 19. People have been requested not to leave their homes on weekends from February 29. In addition, it has been confirmed that at least one person in Miyagi Prefecture has been infected.

The COVID-19 virus is invisible. Young people in particular display no symptoms even if infected. They could unwittingly transmit it to others, leading to it spreading to their families and the community in general. If this happens, the number of patients could abruptly increase, elderly patients could die, and Japan's medical institutions could become overwhelmed.

The data we have so far for Japan suggests that about 20% of those infected will transmit the virus to others. It has been determined that the most dangerous actions in terms of infection are staying in enclosed, crowded, poorly ventilated spaces, or speaking to others at arm's length distance or closer.

We ask that you carefully read the following and take measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- With respect to extracurricular clubs and circles, we ask that you instruct students to cancel or delay all activities which expose them to a high risk of being infected, such as tournaments, competitions, and retreats.
- Please refrain from unnecessary and non-urgent business trips both within Japan and to overseas destinations for the time being because of the risk of infection. As much as possible, conduct meetings online.
- Students traveling abroad should also take heed of information regarding the virus at their destination and should cancel their travel to areas in which it is present.
- If you must hold activities indoors, limit the number of people, ensure there is ample space, and curtail the time of the activity as much as possible. However, such limitations do not apply if activities are being held outside, or indoors with sufficient ventilation, and the participants are not crowded together, or if the activities are performed alone.
- With regard to practical experience, etc., each department should consider discontinuing or postponing it for the time being. Please be flexible in the handling of credit recognition and so on. In cases where practical experience is being carried out at other institutions, please follow the guidance provided by the partner universities.
- In addition to observing infection prevention measures (thorough hand-washing, using hand sanitizer, covering your mouth when coughing, keeping rooms ventilated etc.) please monitor your health. If you have cold symptoms or a fever (37.5°C or above), please stay home.
- The Japanese government recommends that if you have cold symptoms or a fever of 37.5°C or above for 4 or more days in a row, you should undergo a consultation by phone. Please phone the call center (022-211-3883), follow their instructions, and then report your situation to the Student Health Care Center. When arranging a consultation at a medical facility, phone them first. Where a mask and avoid public transportation when going to the consultation.

The above is in effect until late March, but this may be extended depending on the situation.

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