



Date: 10 March 2020  
Letter to SAU Conferences

RE: Coronavirus in South Africa

Beloved Body of Christ, greetings in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ.

The outbreak of novel Coronavirus (COV-19) in December last year was worrying, this infection started in China and now it is in South Africa. I am writing this letter to EASE the concerns that the brethren may have BUT encouraging the SAU SDA family to be more VIGILANT.

COVID-19 is a NEW VIRUS that has not been previously identified in humans. It comes from a family of viruses that infects animals but sometimes they also infect humans.

The TRANSMISSION of this virus is when a person gets infected from 'infected' droplets coming from an individual who is infected with the virus when sneezing and/or coughing (DIRECT ROUTE). Infection can also occur if the person 'infects' himself or herself by touching contaminated items e.g. furniture with 'infected' droplets (INDIRECT ROUTE).

Infected individuals may have these SYMPTOMS: fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties and in severe instances they may have pneumonia, kidney failure and death.

**NOTE:**

- In cases where death occurred, the individuals infected were frail, had underlying diseases (e.g. heart failure, cancer) and had poor immune system function.
- The person is MOST INFECTIOUS when they show the above symptoms.

**1. Groups at Risk of Infection**

- People with close contact with animals e.g. live animal market worker.
- People caring for those with infection e.g. family members, health care workers.
- International travellers including people who have recently travelled to China or people who had a contact with a recent traveller from China.



2. Treatment: NONE

(Treatment and vaccines are still being developed.)

3. PREVENTION OF INFECTION IS IMPORTANT

Here are the recommended hygiene practices to prevent the infection and its transmission:

A) Stay at home when you are not feeling well.

- If you have fever, cough, difficulty in breathing seek medical help EARLY and SHARE your previous history of travel with health care worker.
- Cover the mouth and nose when sneezing with a flexed elbow, tissue paper or a medical mask.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Appropriate use of masks and personal protective equipment in a health care setting.
- WASH HANDS REGULARLY with Soap and running Water or use an alcohol based hand rub (sanitizer) to wash the hands.
- Avoid touching your face with your hands.
- Put a SURGICAL MASK when you are unwell and have symptoms in the event you go OUTDOORS.

B) Measures to prevent infection from an animal source

- Avoid unnecessary unprotected contact with animals.
- Washing hands after contact with animals or animal products.
- Animal products should be cooked THOROUGHLY before they are eaten.
- wash THOROUGHLY the vegetables before use.

C) Church Gatherings:

- Church members and food handlers should STRICTLY follow the general hygiene measures stated above.

D) Natural Remedies that boost the immune system are advisable.

E) Personal Update

Given that COVID-19 outbreak is evolving rapidly what is known might change. Check the following websites for up to date information:

- World Health Organization
- Your country's Department of Health

If you are not able to access the internet:

- listen to the news on the radio.
- watch the news on television.

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For further details or queries on this subject, please contact your local conference Health Ministries Director.

I hope this letter will assist our church members. I hope that it will not create UNNECESSARY PANIC, prejudice or tension between church members.

Let's remember in our prayers the victims of this infection and their families.

Regards,

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Director  
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