

# CORONAVIRUS

(COVID-19)

## A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES

This document has been created for the community members of The Organization of North American Shia Ithnasheri Muslim Communities (NASIMCO) in effort to increase safety and awareness in our community centres.

Updated March 3, 2020

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**NASIMCO**

North American Shia Ithna - Asheri Muslim Communities Organization

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement from NASIMCO	1
Statement from Sayyid Rizvi	2
What is Coronavirus?	3
Symptoms	4
Prevention	5
Test for Coronavirus	6
Treatment	6
Facts	7
Links & Contacts	8

# STATEMENT FROM NASIMCO

In December 2019, an outbreak of pneumonia caused by a new virus in Wuhan City, China was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO). Since that time, the cause of the outbreak has been determined to be a new type of Coronavirus, currently named SARS-CoV-2. The disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 is known as COVID-19.

Person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 continues to occur in China, and such transmission is now occurring in several other countries including in the United States and Canada.

As of March 2, 2020, the WHO has reported a total of 89,845 confirmed cases globally of which 80,026 have been in China. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a level 3 travel warning for China and South Korea, advising travelers to avoid all nonessential travel to China and South Korea.

The CDC has issued level 2 travel warnings for the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy and Japan, advising travelers to these countries to practice enhanced precautions, including avoiding contact with sick people and performing hand hygiene. In addition, older adults and those with chronic medical conditions are encouraged to consider postponing nonessential travel.

NASIMCO and its panel of health care professionals has been carefully monitoring the situation in the United States and Canada. We have been following the recommendations by the CDC, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), and the WHO.

**Dr. Mustafa Salehmohamed**

NASIMCO Medical Subcommittee

# STATEMENT FROM SAYYID RIZVI

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Iman,  
Salaamun 'alaykum

The month of Rajab is here with its barakat and blessings. The month is filled with many religious occasions at the centres & also at private homes for nazr in the name of Imam Ja'far Sādiq (a) – popularly known as kunde or sufra in last half of Rajab.

Keeping in mind the Coronavirus and the way it is spreading, it's important for us to take all precautions necessary to protect ourselves as well as those who come in contact with us. Here are the precautions that we need to follow in such gatherings:

1. In order to protect your fellow brothers and sisters in iman, those who have a cough and/or fever should refrain from attending any gatherings, at the centres or private homes.
2. For nazr at private homes, the hosts can politely add this precaution in their invitations. (Family members can drop off nazr to such brothers and sisters at their homes.)
3. Similarly, if a volunteer at the centre or a family-member of the host has a cough and/or fever, then he/she should not participate in the gathering and should not get involved in preparing the nazr.
4. The centres and even hosts at home gatherings should keep hand sanitizer available at entrances for visitors to use it when entering and exiting.
5. Refrain from shaking hands or hugging during these or other gathering, especially in jamā'at prayer after Salat and at the end of the program.

Remember that dawā and du'ā go hand in hand. It is necessary to take precautions and to pray to the Almighty for protection against the Coronavirus with the wasīla of the Prophet (s) and his Ahlul Bayt (a). In the words of our mujtahids, such as Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi, take the necessarily precautions as instructed by the health officials and also recite ziyārat 'Ashūra and hadith kisā in your homes.

May you be under the grace of Hazrat-e Hujjat (a).

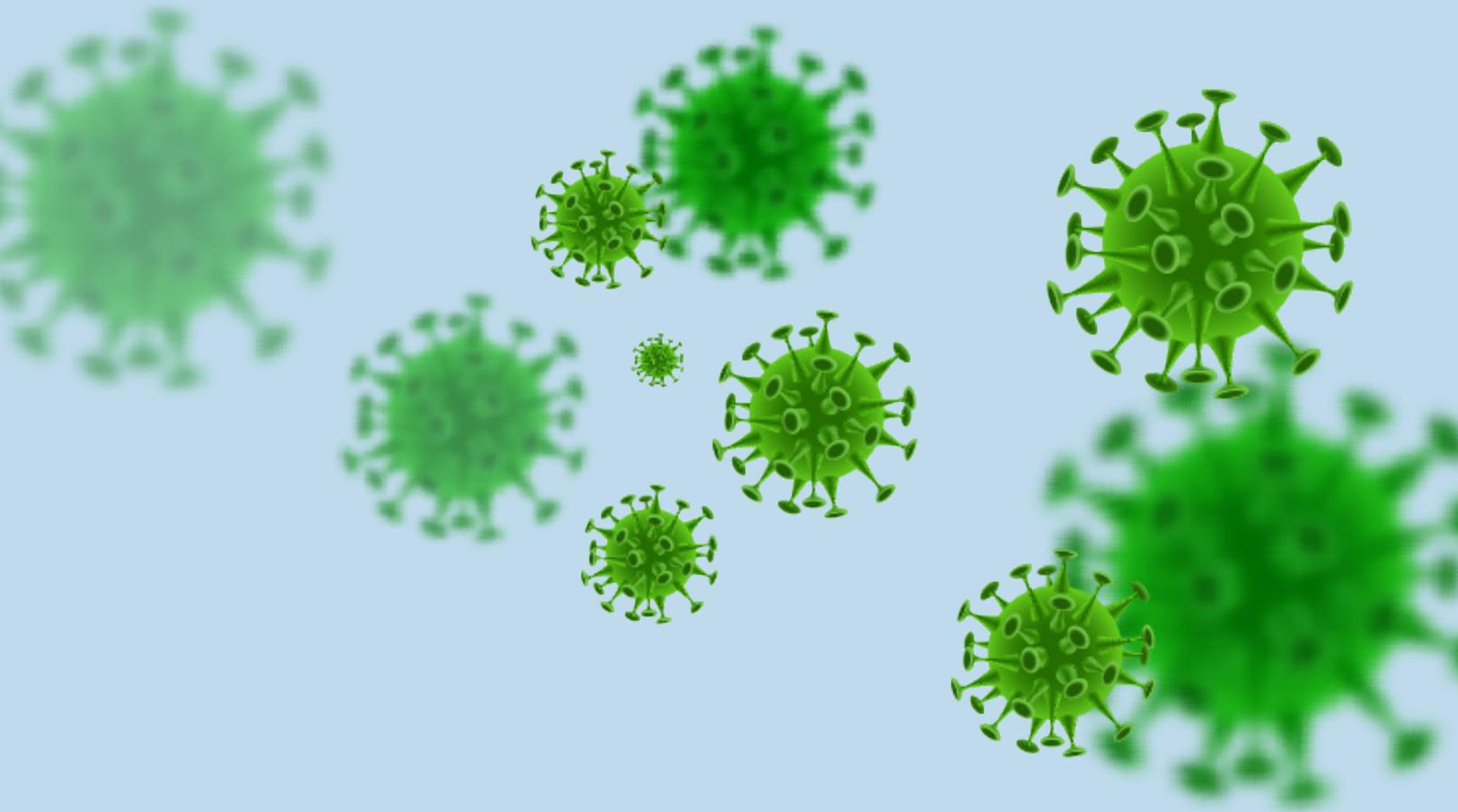
**Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi**

# WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS(COVID-19)?

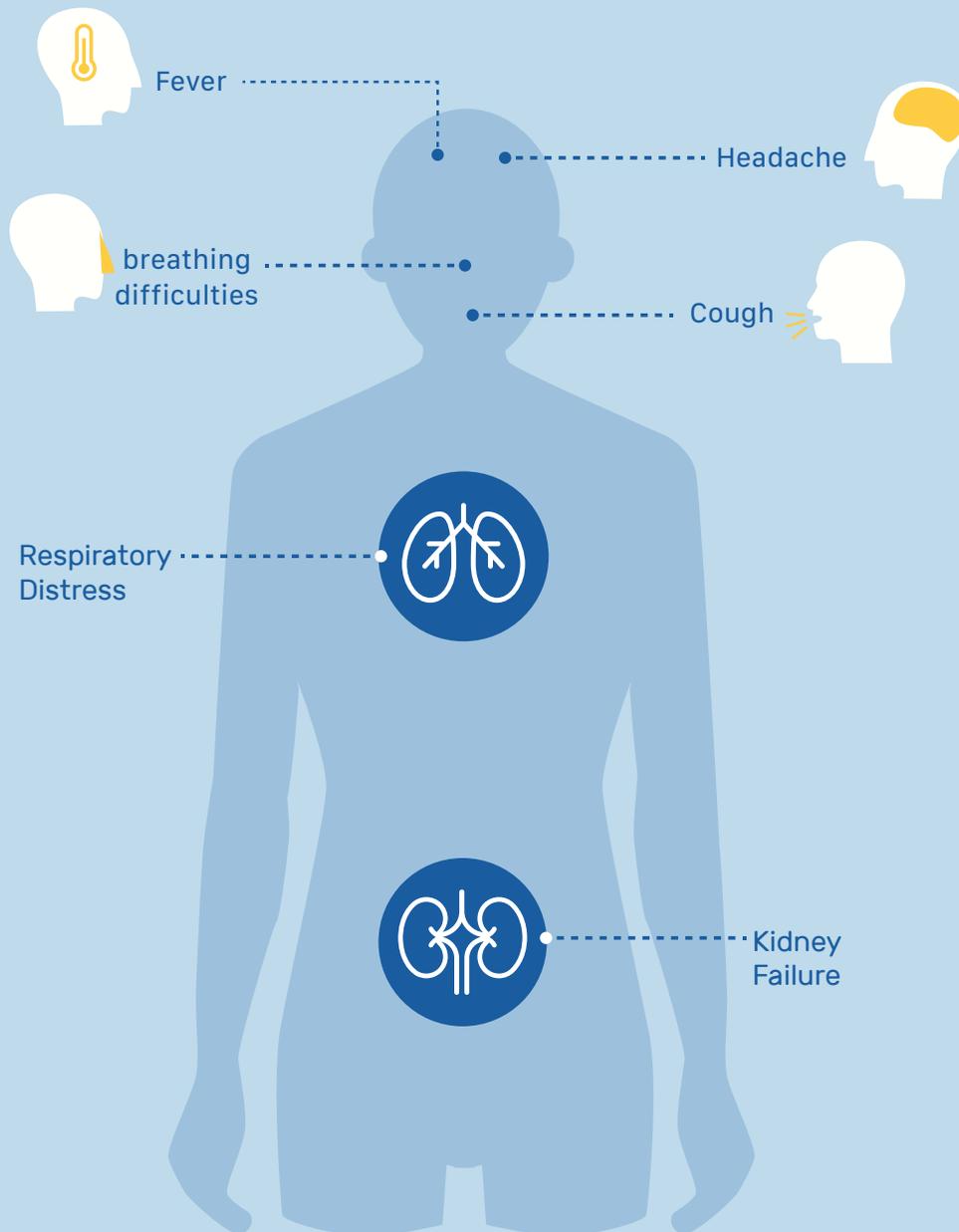
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats.

Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people and then spread between people such as with MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome ) and SARS ( Severe Respiratory Syndrome).

The virus under the microscope looks like a crown and in Latin "Corona" means crown, hence the name Coronavirus. As mentioned above, this virus has been named SARS-CoV-2 and the disease it causes is called COVID-19



# SYMPTOMS



- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Diarrhea

If you are displaying any of these symptoms, then please see your primary care physician immediately. As a community, our concern will be can this be spread during our gatherings at our centers / mosques/ imambarghas? We do highly suggest someone who has the aforementioned symptoms to stay home as a self quarantine until they have recovered. The symptoms may present anywhere from mild to severe forms.

# PREVENTION

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- 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.
- There are no vaccinations at this time. There have been private companies who have begun initial trial phases of vaccine development, however the earliest estimates of any vaccine development for mass public use are in terms of many months.
- 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 healthcare 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 your hands are visibly dirty.
- From a perspective of our communities, we do recommend that at our centers / mosques / imambarghas members avoid hugging or shaking hands as in after Salaat.



# HOW DO WE TEST IF WE HAVE THE CORONAVIRUS?

At this time, hospitals will obtain respiratory tract samples and the only agency in the U.S. able to test for this Coronavirus is the Centers for Disease Controls and Prevention using a specialized kit. The United States government is in full efforts to be able to provide medical centers with SARS-CoV-2 testing kits. In Canada, samples will be sent to PHAC's National Microbiology Laboratory from its medical centers.

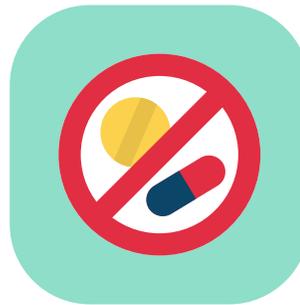
## WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

There are no antibiotics or antiviral treatments for this illness. The treatment is supportive care which means the treatment of the symptoms as they occur. If the severity of your symptoms are mild then a self quarantine at home is appropriate.

However, if your symptoms worsen then please seek immediate medical attention from a healthcare professional.



**NO  
VACCINE**



**NO  
MEDICINE**

# FACTS

Here are some facts regarding COVID-19 as it pertains to us in the United States and Canada:



As of March 2, 2020, 27 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Canada

**Ontario: 18**  
**British Columbia:8**  
**Quebec: 1**

There have been no reported deaths in Canada due to this novel Coronavirus at this time.



As of March, 2, 2020, The U.S. Centers for Disease Controls and Prevention confirmed 91 cases of the novel (new) Coronavirus COVID-19 in the U.S.

Of the 91 cases, 48 were from the Diamond Princess cruise ships (45) and the City of Wuhan itself (3) (repatriated persons).

**6**  
**DEATHS**

There have been 6 reported deaths in the United States from COVID-19 at this time. All of these deaths are clustered in the State of Washington at a particular long term health care facility.

The above numbers will change on a daily basis as more than likely there are more cases which have not been tested and as the virus spreads further.

# LINKS & CONTACTS

**U.S. and Canadian Health Officials continue to reiterate that the public health risks remains low. There is no need for our community members to panic. We must however exercise extreme cautions and preventions as outlined above.**

Below are links to the Centers for Disease Controls and Prevention (CDC), Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), and the World Health Organization (WHO) in regards to the Coronavirus. Please review them carefully and also use them for more updated information

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

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

Below is a link to a live Novel Coronavirus map for those who are planning to travel :

<https://infographics.channelnewsasia.com/covid-19/map.html>

Also below is a link to a lecture by Dr. Khalil Sivjee at ISIJ in Toronto given on February 26, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRh519CndpU&feature=youtu.be>

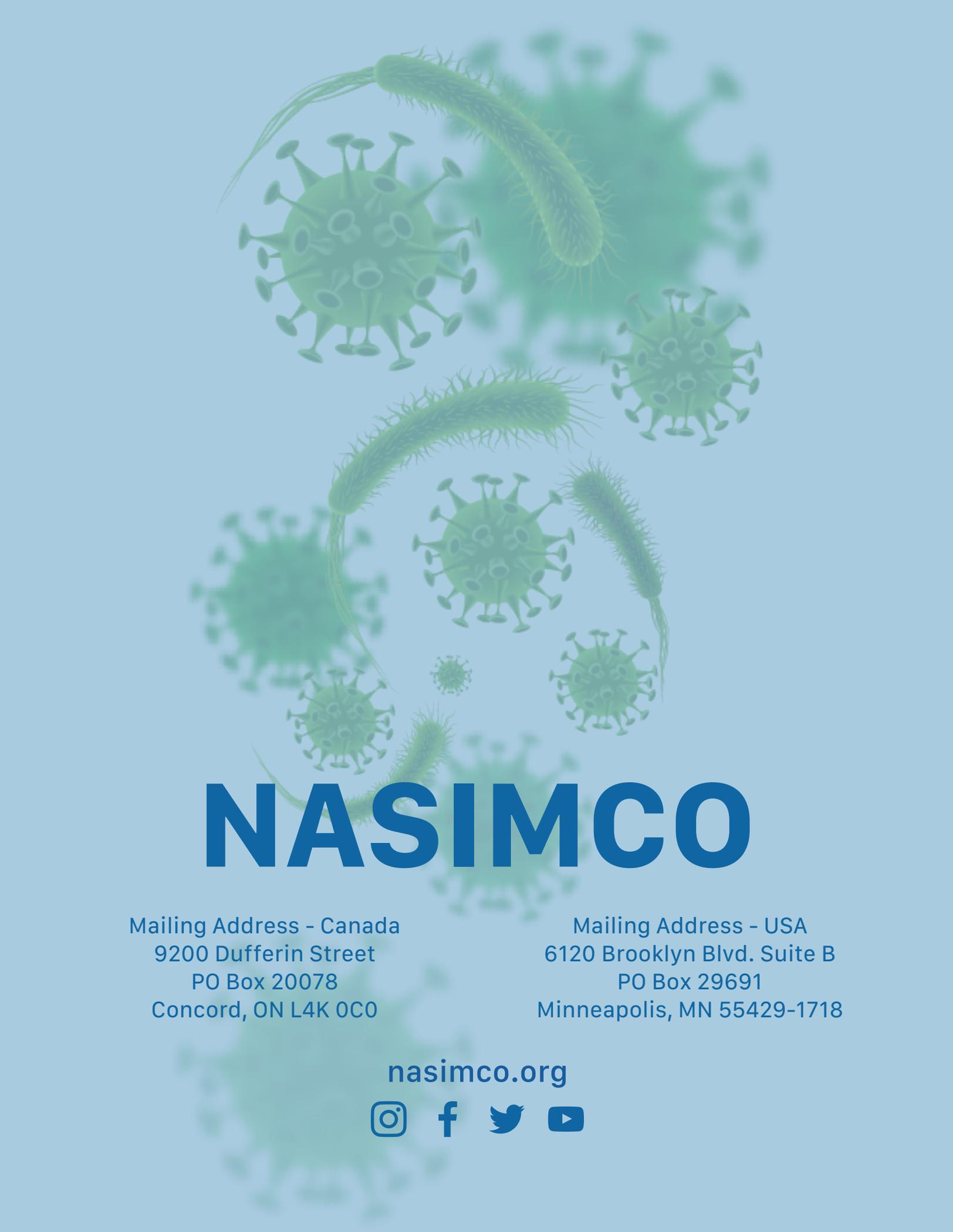
Novel Coronavirus Hotline in the U.S.

Call 1-888-364-3065 for Information about Coronavirus

For further information on COVID-19 in Canada contact:

Tel: 1-833-784-4397

Email: [phac.info.aspc@canada.ca](mailto:phac.info.aspc@canada.ca)

The background of the entire page is a light blue color with a pattern of various green and yellow-green microscopic organisms, including viruses and bacteria, scattered across it. The organisms are rendered in a semi-transparent, illustrative style.

# NASIMCO

Mailing Address - Canada  
9200 Dufferin Street  
PO Box 20078  
Concord, ON L4K 0C0

Mailing Address - USA  
6120 Brooklyn Blvd. Suite B  
PO Box 29691  
Minneapolis, MN 55429-1718

[nasimco.org](http://nasimco.org)

