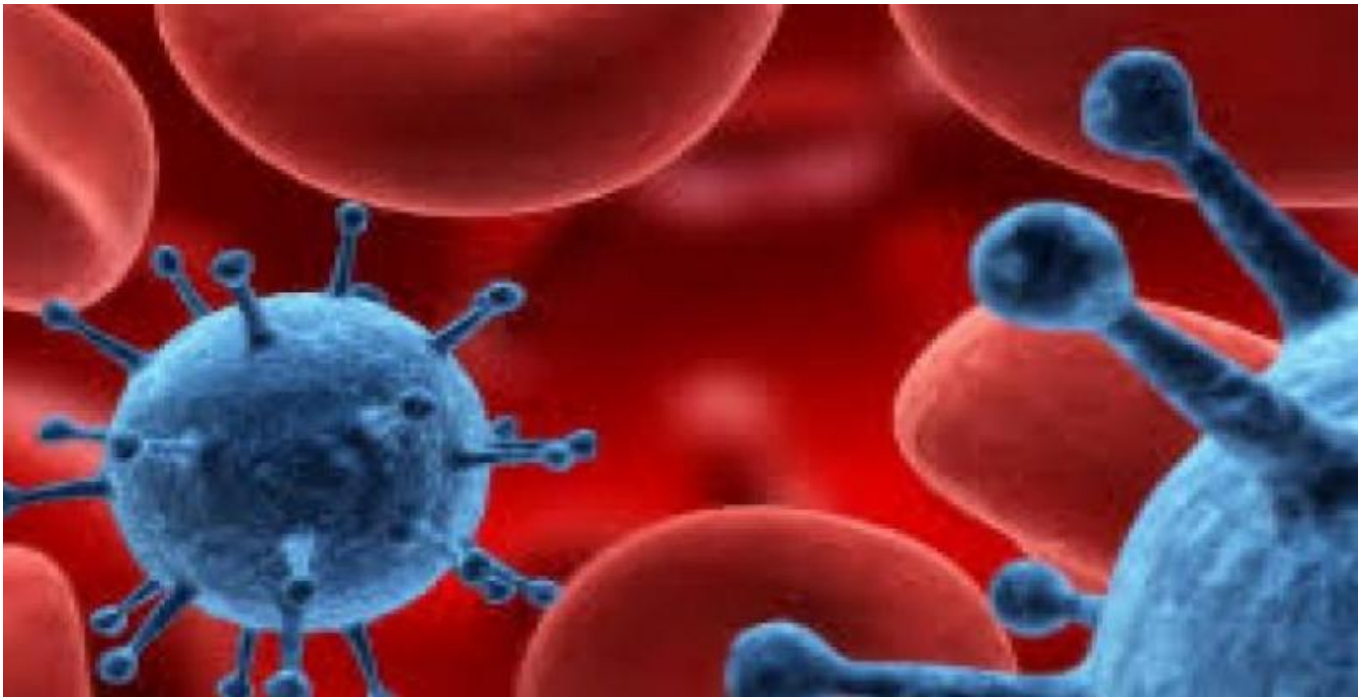


Council of Ministers adopts plan for prevention and control of coronavirus

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The Council of Ministers of Cuba has approved a Plan for the Prevention and Control of the coronavirus epidemic, which originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

The first patients with the acute respiratory syndrome were reported in that city. The disease is transmitted mainly through the saliva drops that the virus carrier emits when coughing or sneezing.

Granma newspaper reports that at a meeting earlier this week, Public Health Minister José Ángel Portal Miranda explained that the plan's aim is to "contain to a minimum the risk of introduction and spread of the coronavirus in Cuba and to minimize the negative effects of an epidemic on the health of the population and its impact on the economic and social sphere."

He added that one of the main actions, following international health control regulations, is to protect the country's borders containing the arrival of sick travelers at airports, ports, and marinas.

Portal added that the plan would ensure strict compliance with surveillance and control measures on travelers and crew members, coming from areas with the transmission.

The minister outlined the measures that have to be implemented not only by Public Health but also by other agencies of the Central State Administration.

Portal Miranda announced that a temporary working group had been created to direct the actions of prevention and preparation for the new coronavirus, as was done in the past with diseases such as Ebola and H1N1.

With more than 5 000 cases of infection by the new coronavirus in 15 countries, 99% of them in China, the World Health Organization (WHO) has urged governments around the world to be vigilant and take action to prevent the spread, which has already caused more than a hundred deaths.