

February 29, 2020

Dear AUB Community,

Following the latest developments regarding the coronavirus in Lebanon, I feel it is vitally important to explain measures our university is currently taking to protect our community and help contain the spread of this disease in the country.

At present, there are a very limited number of confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 being treated in isolation at the Rafik Hariri University Hospital and the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) has said Lebanon is still in the [containment phase](#) of this outbreak. However, the disease will likely spread further, either from people visiting infected areas abroad or being exposed to the virus here. It is necessary, therefore, for healthcare providers to be on high alert for new coronavirus cases and for citizens to be educated about how to protect themselves and others, recognize the symptoms, and take proper action in case of infection.

In order to strengthen AUB's response, we have formed an expert committee on coronavirus that includes specialist faculty and staff from our Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, Rafik Hariri School of Nursing, and AUBMC. This committee will advise the university leadership on all aspects of tackling the disease and mitigating its impact, and it will monitor efforts to keep our community and the public informed about what they can do to stay safe. We shall continue to liaise with our MOPH colleagues, as well as with the regional and local leadership of the WHO.

After extensive consultations, AUB has concluded that the available facts in Lebanon do not justify a large scale home quarantine imposed selectively on educational establishments. This may change, however, so please consult the AUB website and follow us on social media platforms for the latest information.

As Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organisation, said in his [statement](#) yesterday: "Our greatest enemy right now is not the virus itself. It's fear, rumors and stigma. And our greatest assets are facts, reason and solidarity." We fully endorse this viewpoint and will play our role accordingly.

Best regards,

Fadlo R. Khuri, MD
President