

## Notice Regarding Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)

**Last Updated on June 3, 2015**

South Korea has experienced an increase in the number of patients with Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). However, MERS has not yet spread nation-wide to the general public. Officials continue to closely monitor those who have come into direct contact with MERS patients as well as anyone else who may have been exposed to the disease.

People are advised to remain calm as preventative measures are taken.

### About Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS)

MERS was first identified in 2012. The acronym MERS-CoV refers to Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus, the virus that causes MERS. Although similar, MERS-CoV is not the same coronavirus that caused Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003.

### Symptoms

Manifestations of the symptoms of this disease can range from zero/mild symptoms to severe (including death).

The main symptoms of MERS-CoV are: high fever, coughing, and shortness of breath. Pneumonia is common but does not occur absolutely in every case. There have also been reports of diarrhea and other gastrointestinal symptoms.

In the most serious cases, patients have been treated in an ICU (intensive care unit) using an artificial respirator in order to prevent respiratory failure.

It appears that the MERS-CoV virus results in more severe disease for older people or for people whose immune systems have been weakened by pre-existing conditions such as cancer, diabetes, or chronic lung disease.

### How is MERS transmitted?

Non-human to Human Transmission:

Researchers do not yet completely understand how the virus is transmitted between animals and humans. However, because MERS has also been found in camels, it is possible that MERS can be transmitted from animals to humans.

Genetic sequences of MERS - CoV that match strains from humans have been isolated from camels in Egypt, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

Human to Human Transmission:

The virus does not appear to be transmitted easily from person to person unless you come into direct contact with an infected patient (for example, if you provide unprotected medical care to a person with the disease). No sustained community infection has been reported so far.

Most cases of the MERS virus have been reported Saudi Arabia (more than 85%), appearing to circulate primarily in the Arabian Peninsula. There have been several cases reported outside of the Middle East; however, it is thought that the disease was first acquired in the Middle East and then brought out of the region.

## Prevention and Treatment

Presently, there is no vaccine or cure for the MERS virus. Treatment is based on the patient's particular condition.

## For People Traveling to the Middle East

People planning to travel to the Middle East are advised to check the latest developments for up-to-date info.

- [中東に渡航する方へ <中東呼吸器症候群に関する注意> \(外部リンク\)](#)

## Related Links

- [中東呼吸器症候群\(MERS\)に関する Q&A\(外部リンク\)](#)
- [中東呼吸器症候群コロナウイルス\(MERS-CoV\)について \(ファクトシート\)\(外部リンク\)](#)
- [Clinical management of severe acute respiratory infections when novel coronavirus is suspected :What to do and What not to do\(外部リンク\)](#)
- [上記文書の日本語訳等が掲載されている日本感染症学会のホームページ「新型コロナウイルス感染症情報」\(外部リンク\)](#)