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What is MERS-CoV?

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) is a novel virus first reported in 2012 in Saudi Arabia. MERS-CoV is associated with respiratory illness. One case has been reported in the United States. From September 2012 to May 3, 2014, 495 cases have been identified in countries in the Middle East near the Arabian Peninsula. Fatal cases as a result of infection have been reported. Additional information can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/index.html>.

What are the signs and symptoms of MERS-CoV?

Common signs include breathing difficulties, shortness of breath, cough, and fever ($\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$, 38°C). Uncommon conditions include diarrhea and kidney disease.

If am I am exposed and infected by MERS-CoV, how long will it take for me to become sick?

Information currently available suggests that the incubation period for MERS-CoV is approximately 14 days. This means that signs of disease may appear 14 days after exposure. Some individuals may experience signs of illness sooner or later than 14 days due to individual differences.

How is MERS-CoV transmitted?

MERS-CoV can be spread from human to human and, therefore, close contact with those known to be infected with MERS-CoV should be avoided.

Have there been cases of MERS-CoV in the US?

Yes. As of May 2, 2014, one case has been reported to CDC by Indiana State Health Department. A health care provider who was working and residing in Saudi Arabia became ill and is hospitalized in stable condition. The first case of MERS-CoV represents a very low risk to the general public.

I am experiencing the symptoms described above associated with MERS-CoV. Do I have MERS-CoV?

If you have developed symptoms similar to those described for MERS-CoV within 14 days after traveling to the countries affected by MERS-CoV, you are urged to see your healthcare provider as soon as possible as there is an increased possibility that you may have MERS-CoV. It is important to call ahead so appropriate precautions can be taken.

Is MERS-CoV caused by the same virus responsible for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)?

No. MERS-CoV and SARS are caused by two different coronaviruses.

Should I avoid travel to the Middle East?

No. Travel restrictions have NOT been issued as a result of MERS-CoV. It is advised that travelers monitor their health during and after their trip. Contact your health care provider if you develop fever and respiratory symptoms within 14 days of returning from the Middle East.

Are there treatments available?

No. No specific treatment is available for MERS-CoV. Medical care is aimed at relieving specific symptoms.

Is there a vaccine available?

No. Currently, there is no vaccine available.

How can I protect myself?

CDC advises that people protect themselves from respiratory illnesses by washing their hands often, using a tissue when coughing or sneezing, avoiding touching their face with unwashed hands, staying away from ill people, and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

Who can I contact for further information?

You can reach the County of Riverside Department of Public Health Disease Control Branch at (951) 358-5107.

For additional information, you can also visit the following websites:

[CDPH Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus \(MERS-CoV\) Information Webpage](#)

[Centers for Disease Control: Overview of MERS-CoV](#)

For the most recent updates on the number of cases, you can visit:

[World Health Organization: Coronavirus Infections](#)