



MERS CoV

What is MERS Co-V?

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is a viral respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus called “Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus” (MERS-CoV).

How does MERS-CoV spread?

MERS-CoV has spread between people who are in close contact.
Some people became infected after having contact with camels.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Most people who got infected with MERS-CoV developed severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
About 3 to 4 out of every 10 people reported with MERS have died. Most of the people who died had an underlying medical condition. Some infected people had mild symptoms or no symptoms at all.

Am I at risk?

People at increased risk for MERS-CoV infection, include:

- recent travelers from the Arabian Peninsula
- people who have had close contact, such as caring for or living with, an ill traveler from the Arabian Peninsula
- people who have had close contact, such as caring for or living with, a confirmed case of MERS
- healthcare personnel who do not use recommended infection-control precautions
- travelers to the Arabian Peninsula who have had contact with camels

Can I travel to countries where MERS cases have occurred?

Yes. CDC does not recommend that anyone change their travel plans because of MERS. Travelers to these areas who have a pre-existing major medical condition (e.g. chronic diseases such as diabetes or chronic bronchitis, immunodeficiency) should be aware that

these conditions can increase the likelihood of more severe medical problems, associated with MERS-CoV infection. Thus, they should consult a health care provider before travelling, to review the risk and assess whether the travel is medically advisable.

Travelers going to countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula to provide health care services, should practice CDC’s recommendations for infection control of confirmed or suspected cases and monitor their health closely.

What if I have recently travelled to countries where MERS cases have occurred and got sick?

If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, within 14 days after traveling from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula, you should contact your healthcare provider and mention your recent travel.

What are the treatments for MERS Co-V?

There are no specific treatments recommended for illnesses caused by MERS-CoV. Medical care is supportive and to help relieve symptoms.

How can I protect myself?

There is no vaccine against MERS Co-V.

People should follow these tips to help prevent respiratory illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact, such as kissing, sharing cups, or sharing eating utensils, with sick people.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs.

Adapted from: *Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/downloads/factsheet-mers_en.pdf accessed June 7, 2018)