

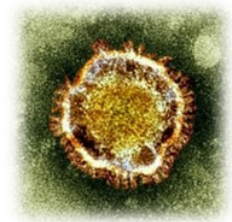
# For Staff /Patient Education

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus

# MERS-CoV

February 2015

## What is it?



- Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is an illness caused by a virus (more specifically, a beta [coronavirus](#)) called Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV).
- Saudi Arabia is entering the third year of battling the MERS-Coronavirus.
- MERS affects the respiratory system (lungs and breathing tubes).
- Most MERS patients developed severe acute respiratory illness with symptoms of **fever, cough and shortness of breath**. About 3-4 out of every 10 patients reported with MERS have died. Other symptoms can include sore throat, coryza, nausea and vomiting, dizziness, sputum production, diarrhea, and abdominal pain.
- The median incubation period for secondary cases associated with limited human-to-human transmission is approximately 5 days (range 2-14 days).

## How is it spread?

Information is still limited about the MERS CoV characteristics and transmission: TRANSMISSION maybe-

- **Direct** through droplets produced during coughing or sneezing or during aerosol-generating procedures.
- **Indirect** through touching surfaces and devices contaminated with the virus, and then touching the mouth, nose or eyes.
- Direct contact with infected patients.

## Where is it found?

- Found in animal hosts which are camels and bats. <http://www.moh.gov.sa/en/CCC/Misconceptions/Pages/default.aspx>

## Prevention & Control:

- Common sense prevention measures are sufficient to reduce exposure risk: avoiding physical contact with people who are sick; regularly washing hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers; avoiding touching the mouth, nose and eyes with exposed hands; avoiding crowded places; avoiding raw meat and animal produce such as milk; avoiding contact with obviously sick animals; sick animals should not be slaughtered for consumption.
- **Avoid close contact**, such as kissing, sharing cups, or sharing eating utensils, with sick people.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys, doorknobs, tabletops, counter and equipments.
- For Healthcare Workers (HCWs): IC precautions were upgraded from standard-contact-droplet to **STANDARD-CONTACT -AIRBORNE Precautions** (MOH-Guidelines for Corona patients 08 December 2014).
- Wearing masks is not necessary unless you are visiting sick patients.
- Maintain personal hygiene and healthy habits including balance diet, physical activity, and get plenty of sleep.
- There is no available vaccine or a qualitative medication available for this disease so far, however, patients should take supportive medication to deal with the complications and alleviate symptoms.
- Stay home when you're sick. Don't forget to consult your doctor when necessary, and seek updated information about the virus by the Ministry of Health.
- Take plenty of water and get flu shot yearly.



**For HCWs:** MOH Saudi Arabia Scientific Advisory Council has made further revision of Guidelines for Corona patients (2nd Edition), dated 8 December 2014, that includes upgrading the isolation precautions to **airborne precautions** for all categories of patients.



For more information contact:

*candolb14269*  
Ms. Lucita B. Cando, BSN-RN  
Infection Control Practitioner  
Email: [candolb@alj.com](mailto:candolb@alj.com)  
Telephone No: (02) 6770001 local 1611

Sources:



مركز القيادة و التحكم  
Command & Control Center



Abdul Latif Jameel Hospital  
Infection Prevention and  
Control Department



LBC