



Update on H7N9 and MERS-CoV

H7N9

The Beijing Center for disease control announced yesterday they had found an additional case of H7N9 in a six-year-old boy. This was a previously unknown case. The boy had sought medical care for fever and sore throat and was hospitalized on May 21. He received therapy and was discharged two days later. After lab tests confirmed that he was infected with H7N9 he was readmitted for observation. No family members have been diagnosed with the influenza virus.

A study just released from the Lancet announced that there were genetic markers found in the H7N9 virus of some of the patients to suggest antiviral resistance. How this resistance was developed in some patients and not in others is not known and needs to be closely watched.

MERS-CoV

Margaret Chan MD, the President of the World Health Organization, expressed concerns about MERS-CoV describing the virus as a global threat stating *"These are alarm bells and we must respond. The novel coronavirus is not a problem that any single affected country can keep to itself or manage all by itself. The novel coronavirus is a threat to the entire world."*

Saudi Arabia announced that they had identified five more cases of MERS-CoV yesterday. Most of the patients were from the eastern part of the country, were older men and had a history of chronic disease.

Agence France Presse (AFP) reported yesterday the death of, a 65-year-old man infected with the MERS-CoV who had recently traveled to the Middle East and shared a hospital room with a person infected with the MERS-CoV virus. This is the first death due to MERS-CoV reported in France.

Recommendations

Recommendations for EMS do not change. Constant vigilance for patients with unexplained febrile illness with respiratory symptoms that have recent travel to the Middle East or China should prompt health care providers to notify local public health authorities. The best protection against both viruses is the appropriate use of PPE and frequent hand washing. Recommendations for EMS have been posted in previous articles located here.

This document is provided by FirstWatch as a service to prehospital and public health providers. The information has been compiled from a variety of sources such as the CDC, Health Canada and WHO. It is copyrighted, but may be freely copied and distributed as long as it remains intact. www.firstwatch.net