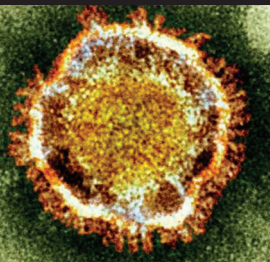


# Key facts about MERS

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), first identified in Saudi Arabia in 2012, is an illness caused by a coronavirus – part of a family of viruses that includes the common cold. It is closely related to SARS\*, which infected 8,000 people across the world and killed almost 800 before it was stopped in 2004



## SYMPTOMS



Develop between two and 14 days after exposure. Most people experience fever, cough and shortness of breath.

Complications include pneumonia and kidney failure. About 36% of patients die. Some infected people exhibit mild or no symptoms

## PEOPLE AT RISK



Older people and those with weakened immune systems or pre-existing medical conditions – such as cancer, diabetes

and chronic lung, heart or kidney disease – appear to be at greater risk of contracting MERS or having severe case of disease

## SOURCE OF VIRUS



Disease believed to have originated in bats and transmitted to camels in distant past. Strains of MERS coronavirus identical

to those found in humans have been isolated from camels in several countries, including Egypt, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia

## TRANSMISSION



Usually by coughing and sneezing, on droplets of saliva or mucus. Virus does not appear to pass easily from person

to person except by close contact, such as providing unprotected care to infected patient. No evidence of sustained human-to-human spread

## TREATMENT / PREVENTION



No vaccine or antiviral medicine available. Risk of infection can be reduced by good hand and respiratory hygiene. People

advised to avoid personal contact with sick people, touching sick animals and consuming raw or undercooked animal products

## DISTRIBUTION OF CASES



More than 85 percent of MERS infections since 2012 have been reported in Saudi Arabia. Most cases elsewhere in world

are thought to have been acquired in Middle East and exported outside of region. Outbreak in South Korea is largest outside of Middle East