

# Health officials tell US doctors to watch for MERS

June 11 2015, by Mike Stobbe

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Health officials are advising U.S. doctors to be on the lookout for people sickened by Middle East respiratory syndrome, also called MERS, following an outbreak in South Korea.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Thursday reminded doctors to ask patients with severe respiratory illness if they recently traveled.

Officials are now urging testing for MERS in very sick patients who had visited a South Korea hospital within two weeks of falling ill.

MERS was first detected in 2012 in the Middle East. More than 1,200 cases have been confirmed, including two travelers to the United States last year.

The MERS virus is thought to spread through sneezing and coughing, but not as easily as the flu or some other diseases.

**More information:** CDC MERS page:  
[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/index.html)

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