

Woman isolated in Hong Kong hospital over MERS

June 10 2015

A woman was rushed to a Hong Kong hospital Wednesday on suspicion she had contracted the potentially deadly MERS virus, as an outbreak in South Korea triggers alarm elsewhere in Asia.

The unidentified woman had sought treatment at a clinic in Tsing Yi station for a runny nose and fever after returning to the southern Chinese city from a trip to South Korea.

"The Centre for Health Protection received a report of a suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome from a private doctor involving a 22-year-old woman," the government health body said in a statement.

The suspected MERS carrier visited South Korea from May 23-27. "She presented with a [runny nose](#) on June 7 and had a fever on June 9," the centre said, adding that she is in isolation at a hospital and in stable condition.

Health workers wore protective gear as the area around the clinic was cordoned off.

Hong Kong had previously quarantined 19 people as a precaution against MERS and had also isolated suspected cases which turned out to be false alarms.

In the worst outbreak outside Saudi Arabia, nine people have died in South Korea and 108 have been infected. The first infected patient was

diagnosed on May 20.

The virus is considered a deadlier but less infectious cousin of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed 299 people in Hong Kong in 2003.

There is no vaccine or cure for MERS which, according to World Health Organization data, has a fatality rate of around 35 percent.

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