

# New coronavirus can spread among humans

14<sup>th</sup> May, 2013



The World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that a new coronavirus strain could be passed from human to human. The virus, called nCoV-EMC, looks like an offshoot of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which

killed 775 people and infected 8,273 between 2002-03. However, the WHO was quick to point out that the new strain isn't as virulent as SARS. The warning came after the 34th case worldwide came to light on Sunday. A man is in a "very serious but stable" condition in an intensive care unit in France. It is believed he contracted the virus while vacationing in Dubai in April. The new coronavirus has already claimed the lives of 18 people, 15 of the fatalities being in Saudi Arabia.

Coronavirus causes respiratory illnesses in both humans and animals. Unlike SARS, which spread from birds and animals to humans, the new strain could have mutated to spread between people. A WHO spokesman, Keiji Fukuda, told reporters in the Saudi capital Riyadh on Sunday that the new virus posed an "important and major challenge" for those countries already affected and for the whole world. He stressed that while the new virus was not SARS, it was very worrying. He said: "Of most concern is the fact that the different clusters seen in multiple countries increasingly support the hypothesis that when there is close contact, this coronavirus can transmit from person to person".

Sources: Al Jazeera / Wall Street Journal / Wikipedia

## Writing

*If there is a major person-to-person virus, all international travel should be banned until a solution can be found. Discuss.*

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

coronavirus / offshoot / syndrome / infected / virulent / worldwide / vacationing / illnesses / mutated / major challenge / clusters / hypothesis / person to person

## True / False

- The WHO confirmed an old coronavirus spreads between humans. T / F
- The new virus resembles a virus from 10 years ago called SARS. T / F
- SARS killed over 8,000 people between 2002-2003. T / F
- The new virus strain has caused the death of 18 Saudi Arabians. T / F
- SARS spread to humans via both birds and animals. T / F
- The new virus could have mutated to be contagious among humans. T / F
- The WHO said the virus was a worry not just in places already affected. T / F
- The WHO said the virus spreads without humans being in close contact. T / F

## Synonym Match

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. warned      | a. indicate    |
| 2. point out   | b. presented   |
| 3. virulent    | c. deaths      |
| 4. claimed     | d. leads to    |
| 5. fatalities  | e. transformed |
| 6. causes      | f. cautioned   |
| 7. mutated     | g. group       |
| 8. posed       | h. theory      |
| 9. cluster     | i. taken       |
| 10. hypothesis | j. infectious  |

## Discussion – Student A

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'virus'?
- How much do you worry when you hear about the spread of viruses?
- How big a problem would it be if the coronavirus spread worldwide?
- What would governments do if the virus started killing thousands?
- What would you do if the virus was spreading in your country?
- How do you think the SARS virus stopped?
- Do you have confidence that scientists can provide vaccines for viruses?
- What do you know about the new coronavirus strain?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. a new coronavirus strain could be passed | a. as virulent as SARS   |
| 2. killed 775 people                        | b. and major challenge   |
| 3. the new strain isn't                     | c. lives of 18 people    |
| 4. in a very serious                        | d. illnesses             |
| 5. already claimed the                      | e. from human to human   |
| 6. respiratory                              | f. contact               |
| 7. the new strain                           | g. in multiple countries |
| 8. the new virus posed an important         | h. but stable condition  |
| 9. different clusters seen                  | i. could have mutated    |
| 10. when there is close                     | j. and infected 8,273    |

## Discussion – Student B

- Is infection among humans as dangerous as animal to human infection?
- What is being reported about the coronavirus in your country's press?
- What challenges does the virus pose to the world?
- What is a virus?
- When should governments start issuing health warnings and advice?
- Would you start avoiding people if the virus spread?
- How do new viruses keep appearing?
- What questions would you like to ask a virus expert?

## Spelling

- looks like an ffoosoth
- Severe Acute Respiratory rmenydSo
- the new strain isn't as tvrenuli
- an enitnsvei care unit
- while cagantionvi in Dubai
- 15 of the asfleitati
- Islessien in both humans and animals
- ...could have tamdtue
- depos an important and major challenge
- countries already aetffdc
- different utsclsr seen in multiple countries
- support the hisetshpoy

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. a	3. j	4. i	5. c
6. d	7. e	8. b	9. g	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Coronavirus worrier

You think the coronavirus is the biggest threat to people's health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why they are wrong to worry about their health concern. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): sodas, a lack of exercise or fast food.

### Role B – Worried about sodas

You think sodas are the biggest threat to people's health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why they are wrong to worry about their health concern. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the coronavirus, a lack of exercise or fast food.

### Role C – Worried about lack of exercise

You think a lack of exercise is the biggest threat to people's health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why they are wrong to worry about their health concern. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): sodas, the coronavirus or fast food.

### Role D – Fast food worrier

You think fast food is the biggest threat to people's health. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why they are wrong to worry about their health concern. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): sodas, the coronavirus or fast food.

## Speaking - Concerns

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put your biggest concerns at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- virus pandemics
- terrorism
- computer viruses
- the environment
- war
- your looks
- money
- your English

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.