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Health Advisory

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Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV): Updated Recommendations for Evaluation & Laboratory Submission

The San Francisco Department of Health provides this guidance based on current information. For the most up to date information, visit www.sfdcdp.org. Recommendations may change, and SF recommendations may differ from those issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

UPDATE- from CDC and CDPH as of 6/12/2015:

- In addition to prior criteria for evaluation (severe respiratory illness after travel to the Arabian Peninsula; or milder respiratory illness and time spent in a healthcare facility in the Arabian Peninsula), **evaluation for MERS-CoV should also extend to persons with fever and pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome who were in a healthcare facility in South Korea within 14 days before symptom onset.**

See full criteria for Persons under Investigation (PUI) at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/interim-guidance.html

SITUATION: An outbreak of MERS-CoV began in South Korea in May 2015, when an individual became ill after traveling to several countries of the Arabian Peninsula, and then sought medical care at several healthcare facilities in South Korea. Healthcare providers should consider MERS-CoV infection in ill persons who have recently traveled from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula or been in a healthcare facility in South Korea.

New cases of MERS-CoV continue to occur in the Arabian Peninsula. MERS-CoV currently poses a low risk to residents in the USA, and no cases have yet occurred in California. However, if introduced from travelers, MERS-CoV may spread readily in healthcare facilities unless appropriate infection control measures are used.

ACTIONS REQUESTED OF CLINICIANS:

1. **Remain alert for potential cases of MERS-CoV. Obtain a detailed travel history** from patients ill with acute respiratory disease. (Visit <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/MERS-CoV.aspx> and see “June 2015 – CDPH Update for Health Care Providers on MERS”)
2. **Immediately report suspected cases** of MERS-CoV by telephone 24/7 to SFDPH Communicable Disease Control (CDCU) 415-554-2830. After hours follow voice instructions to contact the on-call MD. Notify CDCU of close contacts to confirmed or probable cases of MERS-CoV while the case was ill.
3. In health care settings, promptly institute **Airborne, Contact, and Standard infection control precautions** (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/infection-prevention-control.html). Isolate outpatients using these home care guidelines: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/hcp/home-care.html.
4. **Lab specimens should be collected as soon as possible in consultation with SFDPH CDCU 415-554-2830. Contact SFDPH CDCU before** submitting any laboratory specimens. Revised instructions for specimen collection and processing are located at sfdcdp.org/MERS-CoV.html

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

San Francisco Dept. Public Health: www.sfdcdp.org/MERS-CoV.html

CA Dept. Public Health: www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/MERS-CoV.aspx

CDC: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00380.asp> & www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/hcp.html

World Health Organization: www.who.int/csr/disease/coronavirus_infections/en/index.html