



*Embassy of the United States of America
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

MESSAGE FOR U.S. CITIZENS

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)

June 8, 2013

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that as of June 7, 2013, a total of 55 people in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, Tunisia, France, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United Arab Emirates were confirmed to have respiratory illness caused by the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV), formerly known as “Novel Coronavirus.” Thirty-one of the infected persons have died.

Information about MERS has been posted on the CDC Travelers’ Health website at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/coronavirus-arabian-peninsula> and <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/overview.html>. The linked pages contain more detailed information about MERS, tips for travelers, and useful links to other sources of information. The Saudi Ministry of Health has also developed a website to follow MERS at: <http://www.moh.gov.sa/en/HealthAwareness/Corona/Pages/AboutCorona.aspx>.

At this time, WHO and CDC have not issued travel health warnings for any country related to MERS.

Taking these everyday actions can help prevent the spread of germs and protect against colds, flu, and other illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an [alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Be sure you are up-to-date with all of your immunizations, and if possible, see your healthcare provider at least 4–6 weeks before travel to get any additional immunizations. Visit CDC’s [Travelers’ Health](#) website for more information on healthy travel.
- If you are sick
 - Cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue in the trash.
 - Avoid contact with other people to keep from infecting them.

CDC recommends that U.S. travelers to countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula monitor their health and see a health care provider if they develop fever and symptoms of lower respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath.

For health issues, include the following: To obtain Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) travel notices, call the CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) from within the United States, or 1-404-639-3534 from overseas, or visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Saudi Arabia enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://step.state.gov/step>. STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Regularly monitor the State Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the Country Specific Information for Saudi Arabia at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1012.html. For additional information, refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad" on the State Department's website.

Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free from within the United States and Canada, or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on Twitter at <https://mobile.twitter.com/travelgov> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/travelgov>. You can also download our free Smart Traveler App, available through iTunes and the Android market, to have travel information at your fingertips.

No -N-03/2013

For any assistance call or e-mail the American Citizens Services Sections at the Embassy or Consulates General as follows:

U.S. Embassy Riyadh Telephone: (966) (1) 488-3800 Fax: (966) (1) 488-7670 Email: RiyadhACS@state.gov

U.S. Consulate General Dhahran Telephone: (966) (3) 330-3200 Fax: (966) (3) 330-0464 Email: DhahranACS@state.gov

U.S. Consulate General Jeddah Telephone: (966) (2) 667-0080 Fax: (966) (2) 669-3078 or 669-3098 Email: JeddahACS@state.gov

You can also review earlier messages for U.S. Citizens at: <http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/amcitmessages.html>.

