

Patients in Denmark not suffering from new virus: hospital

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Five people in isolation in a Danish hospital are suffering from a typical influenza strain and not a new SARS-like respiratory illness as feared, the Odense University Hospital said Wednesday.

"The five have tested positive for [Influenza B](#) and because of their general state we are sure that they do not have the new coronavirus," the hospital's chief physician Svend Stenvang Petersen told AFP.

The five, three adults and two children, had been isolated at the hospital since Tuesday amid fears they had contracted a new virus in the same family as [Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome](#) (SARS) after they experienced fever, coughing and influenza-like symptoms.

"We will be sending them home tomorrow (Thursday)," Petersen said, adding that all five were well despite their influenza.

Two of the five had recently been to the Middle East, with the father of the two children having travelled to Saudi Arabia and an unrelated man in Qatar.

The new virus was recently identified by the British [Health Protection Agency](#) in a Qatari man transferred to London after apparently picking it up in Saudi Arabia.

A Saudi national died earlier this year from a virtually identical virus, the [World Health Organisation](#) has said.

The WHO confirmed in a global alert on Monday that the new virus was in the coronavirus family which causes the common cold but can also include more severe illnesses including SARS.

SARS swept out of China in 2003, killing more than 800 people worldwide.

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