

Saudi man cured of SARS family virus, ministry says

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A Saudi man has been cured after he was diagnosed with a mystery illness from the same family as the deadly SARS virus and from which one person died, the kingdom's health ministry said on Sunday.

He was "diagnosed with a coronavirus infection at a hospital in Riyadh," the ministry announced in a statement reported by the official SPA news agency.

A batch of medical tests sent to "a specialised laboratory outside the kingdom" showed that the man, who did not leave Riyadh, was infected with a virus that had caused fears of an outbreak ahead of last month's hajj pilgrimage.

It did not say when the man was diagnosed with the illness.

He "received suitable treatment and has been cured," said the statement, adding that "the state of his health is reassuring."

"These are individual cases and most of those infected with this virus have been cured after being provided with suitable treatment," it said, without mentioning if any other patients had been diagnosed with the disease.

The [World Health Organisation](#) said in September that the illness in the coronavirus family had caused the death of a Saudi national.

It has also left a Qatari man seriously ill in a London hospital after he was transferred there from Doha earlier this month, the WHO said, adding he had previously been in Saudi Arabia.

The two cases occurred three months apart in June and September respectively, said the WHO, stressing the illness was not [Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome](#) which swept out of China in 2003, killing more than 800 people worldwide.

What sets the [new virus](#) apart from SARS, the agency added, is that it causes rapid [kidney failure](#).

Fears rose last month over the potential spread of the virus during the Muslim hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. But the kingdom's [health ministry](#) repeatedly reassured pilgrims that no epidemic outbreaks had been registered.

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