

First American MERS patient released from hospital

May 10 2014

The first American diagnosed with a mysterious virus from the Middle East has been released from an Indiana hospital and is considered fully recovered, the hospital said Friday.

Community Hospital chief medical information officer Dr. Alan Kumar said the patient now tests negative for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, or MERS, and "poses no threat to the community."

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the patient is an American man. He flew from Saudi Arabia to Chicago on April 24 and took a bus to Indiana. He sought treatment last Monday and was diagnosed with MERS.

MERS belongs to the coronavirus family that also includes the common cold and SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome.

It appears to be unusually lethal—by some estimates, it has killed nearly a third of the people it sickened. That's a far higher percentage than [seasonal flu](#) or other routine infections.

But it is not as contagious as flu, measles or other diseases. There is no vaccine or cure.

Friday's statement said no additional cases of MERS have been identified.

While the virus is not highly contagious, the hospital has isolated at home 50 employees identified as having come in contact with the man before he was diagnosed.

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