

Saudi announces new MERS death

May 19 2014

Saudi health authorities reported Monday a new death from the MERS coronavirus, taking to 169 the overall number of fatalities from the disease in the world's worst-hit country.

The [health ministry](#) said on its website that the latest person to fall victim to the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome was a 59-year-old man who died on Sunday in the western city of Taif.

It reported two new infections, one in Riyadh and the other in the commercial capital of Jeddah, raising the total number of MERS cases to 531.

Other nations including Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates and the United States have also recorded cases, mostly in people who had been to the desert kingdom.

MERS is considered a deadlier but less transmissible cousin of the SARS virus that appeared in Asia in 2003 and infected 8,273 people, nine percent of whom died.

Like SARS, it appears to cause a lung infection, with patients suffering coughing, breathing difficulties and a temperature. But MERS differs in that it also causes rapid kidney failure.

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