

# Oman reports first MERS death in nearly a year

January 8 2015

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Oman reported Thursday its first death of a person from Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in nearly a year.

No further details were given in the health ministry statement carried by the official ONA news agency. It is the third MERS fatality in the Gulf sultanate.

Oman borders Saudi Arabia, the country hardest hit by MERS.

MERS is considered a deadlier but less transmissible cousin of the SARS virus that appeared in Asia in 2003 and infected more than 8,000 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 can cause rapid kidney failure.

Research by Saudi scientists indicates that camels play a role in the transmission of the virus to humans.

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