

Two patients in Britain test negative for MERS

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Two patients in Britain have tested negative for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), officials said Tuesday, after a hospital wing was shut down as a precautionary measure.

Public Health England confirmed the results of the test after the accident and emergency unit of Manchester Royal Infirmary in northwest England was closed for two hours on Monday.

The risk from MERS in Britain "remains very low", Rosemary McCann of PHE said, adding that the two negative tests were "separate and unrelated".

The last person to be diagnosed with the potentially deadly virus in Britain was in February 2013, although there has been a recent increase in cases in the Middle East and a deadly outbreak in South Korea.

There is no known vaccine for MERS, a viral respiratory disease which has killed 490 people, almost all of them in Saudi Arabia, since it was first reported in 2012, according to the World Health Organisation.

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