

China changes method of counting virus infected... again

February 20 2020



Diagnosis of the new coronavirus in China will now require sophisticated laboratory testing

China said Thursday it has again changed the method of counting patients with the novel coronavirus and will now include only those

diagnosed by sophisticated laboratory testing.

It is the second time in just eight days that the country has revised its criteria—a move that could muddle statistics and complicate efforts to track the spread of the illness.

Chinese health officials last week said patients from Hubei province and its capital Wuhan—the epicentre of the outbreak—who had been diagnosed via clinical methods including lung imaging would be added to the count in addition to those confirmed by [lab studies](#).

This led to a huge one-day increase in the number of confirmed cases—14,840—on February 13.

The change was made due to a backlog of patients awaiting nucleic acid tests whose condition was deteriorating, said Wang Guiqiang, chief physician at Peking University First Hospital in Beijing.

"Patients needed active treatment," he said.

"Now the situation in Hubei has changed... There is no backlog of patients who need nucleic acid testing, and we can now quickly test all suspected or undiagnosed cases."

The latest revision comes as China on Thursday reported the biggest drop in new cases of the virus in nearly a month, with 394 more infections nationwide.



Previous diagnosis of the coronavirus in China has relied on lung imaging

In Hubei officials said they were re-tallying downward by 279 the number of cases previously reported in provincial cities after some [patients](#) diagnosed using lung imaging later tested negative in nucleic acid studies.

The death toll across China meanwhile jumped to 2,118 after 114 new deaths were reported—most in Hubei.

© 2020 AFP

Citation: China changes method of counting virus infected... again (2020, February 20) retrieved 7 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-02-china-method-virus-infected.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.