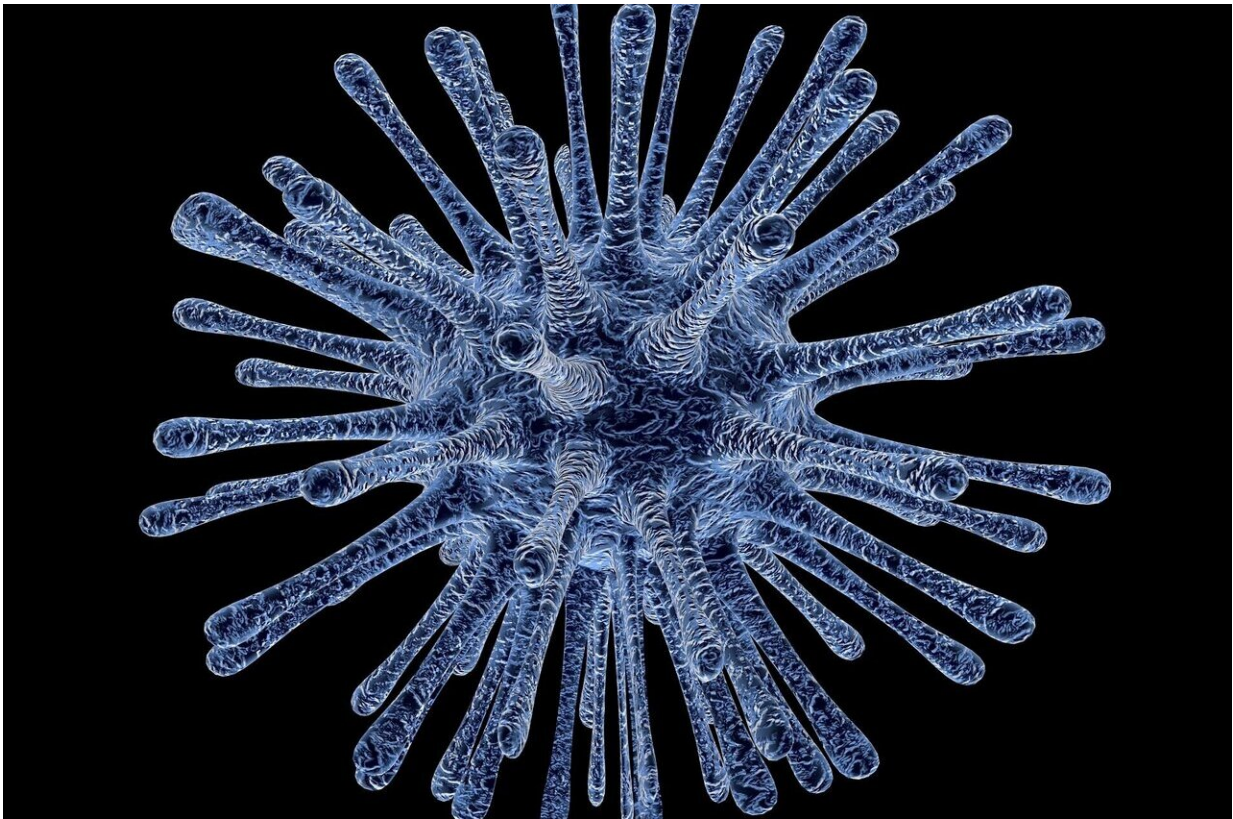


Greece reports first coronavirus case in traveller from Italy (Update)

February 26 2020



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Greece on Wednesday reported its first coronavirus case, a woman who had recently travelled to northern Italy.

A health ministry spokesman said the 38-year-old woman was in a Thessaloniki hospital and in good condition.

"She is in good health and being monitored by a team of excellent colleagues in Thessaloniki," said the ministry's spokesman Sotiris Tsiodras, a leading expert on infectious diseases.

"Her contacts are being tracked. Close contacts will be placed under voluntary quarantine and their health will be monitored," he said.

Tsiodras added that travellers from north Italy should stay at home in case of virus symptoms and inform doctors of their condition.

The announcement comes as the COVID-19 virus continues to surge in Italy, making it the hardest-hit country in Europe.

"We are absolutely prepared. There is no reason to panic," tweeted health minister Vassilis Kikilias.

The Greek government on Tuesday said a shutdown of some public areas and travel restrictions would be activated in case of a mass outbreak.

The measures, contained in a government decree, include temporary travel bans to and from countries with a large number of infections and enable beds to be requisitioned in hotels and private clinics.

The decree also foresees the temporary closure of "indoor public gathering areas" such as schools, places of worship, cinemas, theatres, sports halls and businesses.

"We are ready to do whatever is necessary to protect public health," government spokesman Stelios Petsas told reporters.

Greece's health ministry has earmarked 13 hospitals nationwide to handle virus cases.

A health ministry spokesman earlier this week noted that owing to the virus' long gestation period, health checks at ports and airports had only minor chances of success.

On Monday, the Greek Olympic Committee said it had discussed alternative plans for the Olympic Flame lighting ceremony for the Tokyo 2020 Games in case of a virus outbreak.

The flame for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics is scheduled to be lit on March 12 at the site of ancient Olympia and, following a torch relay on Greek soil, will be handed to the Tokyo organisers at a ceremony on March 19 at the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens.

© 2020 AFP

Citation: Greece reports first coronavirus case in traveller from Italy (Update) (2020, February 26) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-02-greece-readies-shutdown-case-virus.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.