

# Switzerland reports first coronavirus death

March 5 2020

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This transmission electron microscope image shows SARS-CoV-2 -- also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus that causes COVID-19 -- isolated from a patient in the US. Virus particles are shown emerging from the surface of cells cultured in the

lab. The spikes on the outer edge of the virus particles give coronaviruses their name, crown-like. Credit: NIAID-RML

A 74-year-old woman suffering from the new coronavirus has died in Switzerland, marking the country's first death in the outbreak that has claimed more than 3,200 lives globally, police said on Thursday.

The woman, who was hospitalised in the western city of Lausanne with the virus on Tuesday, died overnight, regional police in the canton of Vaud said in a statement.

The woman, who also suffered from a pre-existing chronic illness, had been considered "high risk" from the virus.

COVID-19 produces mild symptoms in 80 percent of cases, but for the elderly and sick it can produce severe pneumonia and multiple organ failure.

Globally, it is estimated to have killed 3.4 percent of those who have contracted the virus.

More than 95,000 people have been infected and over 3,200 have died worldwide from the virus, which by Thursday had reached some 80 countries and territories.

To date, Switzerland has registered 87 confirmed cases of COVID-19 across 17 of the country's 26 cantons since the disease first surfaced in the country on February 25.

The tiny, neighbouring principality of Liechtenstein has also registered one case of the disease.

In a bid to rein in the virus, Switzerland last week suspended all events with more than 1,000 participants until March 15, notably cancelling the Geneva International Motor Show.

On Thursday, the International Labour Organization said that it had decided to cancel a meeting of its governing body, which had been expected to draw around 500 people from more than 70 countries this month, after conducting a risk assessment.

The United Nations' European headquarters in Geneva has also closed its doors to visitors and has curbed some activities linked to the Human Rights Council.

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