

Two new infections end Hong Kong's 24-day virus clean sheet

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Two people in Hong Kong tested positive for coronavirus, officials said Wednesday, ending a 24-day run of no new local cases that saw the city begin to ease social distancing regulations.

The financial hub was on course for 28-days of no local transmissions—a yardstick often used by epidemiologists to judge if an [outbreak](#) has been defeated.

But on Wednesday officials said a 66-year-old woman and her five-year-old granddaughter had tested positive for the virus.

Investigators described them as local transmission cases, saying they were still trying to work out how the older woman had become infected.

"She has no travel history. Her family has no travel history and they have no contact history with confirmed cases," Dr. Chaung Shuk-kwan told reporters, adding officials were planning to test neighbours.

For the last three weeks the only new cases have been in 24 people arriving from overseas, who were placed in quarantine.

The new infections will raise fears that a new outbreak could still occur.

Despite its [close proximity](#) and links to mainland China, Hong Kong has kept infections to around 1,000 people with four deaths using intensive testing and contract tracing.

The city has avoided the kind of harsh lockdowns seen elsewhere.

On Friday authorities began easing many social distancing measures with the re-opening of bars, gyms and cinemas after a three-week closure.

The threat of renewed outbreaks is a persistent worry for governments trying to balance [public health](#) with protecting badly battered economies.

South Korea, which has also been held up as a model for defeating the virus, has seen more than 100 new cases emerge this week with a cluster linked to a Seoul nightclub district.

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