Traveled Recently?
If you have recently traveled to the Middle East, please take this online traveler’s health survey by going to this site:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ACCESS2013Travel

Michigan Department of Community Health
Division of Communicable Disease

Michigan Department of Community Health

Rick Snyder, Governor
James H. Haveman, Director
517-335-8165
www.michigan.gov/mdch

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)

6450 Maple
Dearborn, MI 48126
313-216-2200
www.accesscommunity.org

Other Useful Sources of Information:
www.michigan.gov/cdinfo
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/MERS/
http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices
saudiembassy.net/services/hajj_requirements.aspx

Updated: July 29, 2013
Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is MERS?
A: Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is a viral respiratory illness. MERS is caused by a coronavirus called “Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus” (MERS-CoV).

Q: What is MERS-CoV?
A: MERS-CoV was first reported in 2012 in Saudi Arabia. MERS-CoV used to be called “novel coronavirus,” or “nCoV”. It is different from other coronaviruses that have been found in people before.

Q: What are the symptoms of MERS?
A: Most people who got infected with MERS-CoV developed severe acute respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath. About half of them died. Some people were reported as having a mild respiratory illness.

Q: Does MERS-CoV spread from person to person?
A: MERS-CoV has been shown to spread between people who are in close contact. Transmission from infected patients to healthcare personnel has also been observed. Clusters of cases are currently being investigated. Avoid contact with people that are sick.

Q: Has anyone in the United States gotten infected?
A: So far, there are no reports of anyone in the United States getting infected with MERS-CoV.

Q: How can I help protect myself?
A: It is advised that people follow these tips to help prevent respiratory illnesses:
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact, such as kissing or sharing cups or eating utensils, with sick people.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs.

Q: Is there a vaccine?
A: Not at this time.

Q: What are the treatments?
A: There are no specific treatments for MERS. Medical care is supportive and may help to relieve symptoms.

What to do if you Become Sick

If you develop a fever with cough or difficulty breathing within 14 days after traveling from countries in the Arabian Peninsula or neighboring countries, you should call your doctor and mention your recent travel as soon as possible. This may help you to feel better soon and also help protect your family and friends from becoming sick.

If you do not have a doctor, call to an urgent care clinic or local emergency room or you can call the local health department for advice. Wear a face mask if you go to a doctor’s office or ask for one as soon as you arrive. Tell the doctor about your symptoms and recent travel.

Other things you can do to help protect others from getting sick:
- When you cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or wear a face mask. Throw used tissues in a trash can.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water – especially after you cough or sneeze. If not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Stay home from work or school until you feel better or until a doctor says it is OK to go back.

Countries in the Arabian Peninsula and neighboring countries: Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestinian territories, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen.