

Two eighteen-year-old brothers have been admitted to intensive care this Friday following a rare viral infection, health officials said this week. Local authorities were alerted to a disturbance on the subway earlier that morning and arrived on the scene to find the pair seizing and unconscious. The two men were transported to a nearby hospital and remain in the emergency ward at this time of writing.

Relatives interviewed by local news organizations reported that both brothers had exhibited unusual behavior in the weeks leading up to this incident. Said their mother, who wished to remain anonymous: "They had to be reminded constantly of where they were and how they got there. It got so bad that they couldn't leave the house alone. They were not themselves."

This is the third confirmed case of what local authorities suspect to be a transmissible infection of international origin. The first known patient was admitted to a separate hospital in Alameda County two weeks prior to this writing. The man in question, here referred to as Mr. C, had recently returned from a month-long trip abroad. Further details have not been disclosed at the time of this article, but medical experts have confirmed that the trajectory of his condition is near-identical to the string of recent outbreaks.

Despite these seemingly alarming events, the state's health department believes that the situation is well-contained and safe for most in the area. Said Frank Zeiss, director of the Bureau of Communicable Diseases: "Simply put, it's an unorthodox spin on your common flu. These kinds of mutations are certainly rare in developed countries, but they're not necessarily more dangerous for that. We expect it to run its course over the usual two-week period."

Mr. Zeiss said that state officials believe the two outbreaks to be related, despite the relatively large geographic distance between the two counties. "It's likely that they crossed paths briefly," Zeiss said, "at least a few weeks ago. Thus far, most people in their immediate proximity have shown no sign of ill health. Based on that, we're thinking that symptoms only manifest in immune systems with very specific kinds of vulnerabilities. But the vast majority of people are likely not to be susceptible at all."

Still, state health officials, assisted by a few local agencies, continued to monitor the site of outbreak in Alameda since Thursday and warn people of the symptoms of infection.

"It causes a fairly high fever," said Zeiss, "so be on the lookout for excessive sweating and delirious behavior. And as the flu season approaches, be sure to wash your hands often and well. The best kind of prevention begins at home."