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Norway's news in English

Updated: Norway announces first case of coronavirus



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Norwegian health authorities on Wednesday announced the first case of coronavirus in the Nordic nation in someone who returned from China last week, but said the patient was not "in danger".

"The person is not ill, they are in good health and do not present any symptoms," Line Vold, an official at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (Folkehelseinstituttet, NIPH), told reporters. "We think it is very unlikely that they have infected" others.

Routine tests had given a "weakly positive result" and detected traces of the new coronavirus, the institute said.

The infected woman lives in Tromsø, according to NIPH. A doctor in the city told [NRK](#) that it was "highly unlikely" she had passed the virus on to others.

"This is a person who has been confirmed with a weakly positive test result. She came here from China," municipal senior consultant doctor Kathrine Kristoffersen said to the broadcaster.

She has been in quarantine since arriving in Norway last weekend and her positive test result came on Wednesday, NRK writes.

Kristoffersen said the woman had been tested because she had travelled from an area with a high number of infections.

"This was discovered because it is routine to test people who come to Norway from countries with virus outbreaks," she said.

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The woman is now quarantined at her home and is in "good spirits", according to the doctor.

NIPH's assessment is that the woman is "highly unlikely" to have passed the virus on to others. Authorities will nevertheless seek to trace her contact with other people as a standard procedure.

Despite assessments regarding the woman's transmission risk for the virus, Norwegian authorities

are on alert for more cases.

At a press briefing, Norwegian Directorate of Health (Helsedirektoratet) director of health services Bjørn Guldvog said that the first case in the country was “not unexpected”.

The health authority in Oslo has confirmed to [NRK](#) that 50 people have been asked to stay in home quarantine until they receive results from coronavirus tests.

“50 people have been tested in Oslo during the past two days. They have been told to stay at home until test results are available,” Christian Ekker Larsen, head of communication with the Health Authority in Oslo, told NRK.

WHO spokesperson Dr. Margaret Harris told NRK on Wednesday afternoon that it is important for people in Norway not to immediately go to the doctor or hospital if they suspect they have symptoms of the virus.

“Don't go to the hospital. Don't go to your doctor. Know what to do to get treatment. Inform the health authorities and quarantine yourself,” Harris said.

The virus often begins with symptoms resembling a common cold and can develop into respiratory infection. The elderly and people with already-weakened immune systems are most at risk of serious complications.

The WHO doctor noted that most patients do not become seriously ill, but added that they can infect others who may become seriously ill.

“People need to stay calm. Don't let people move around. Hand hygiene is very important. It sounds so simple, but it is not so easy to make sure you wash your hands often enough. Do not scratch your eyes or nose. Cover your mouth and nose if you cough,” Harris said.

According to WHO figures, up to 80,200 cases and 2,700 deaths from coronavirus have been detected so far, the vast majority in China.

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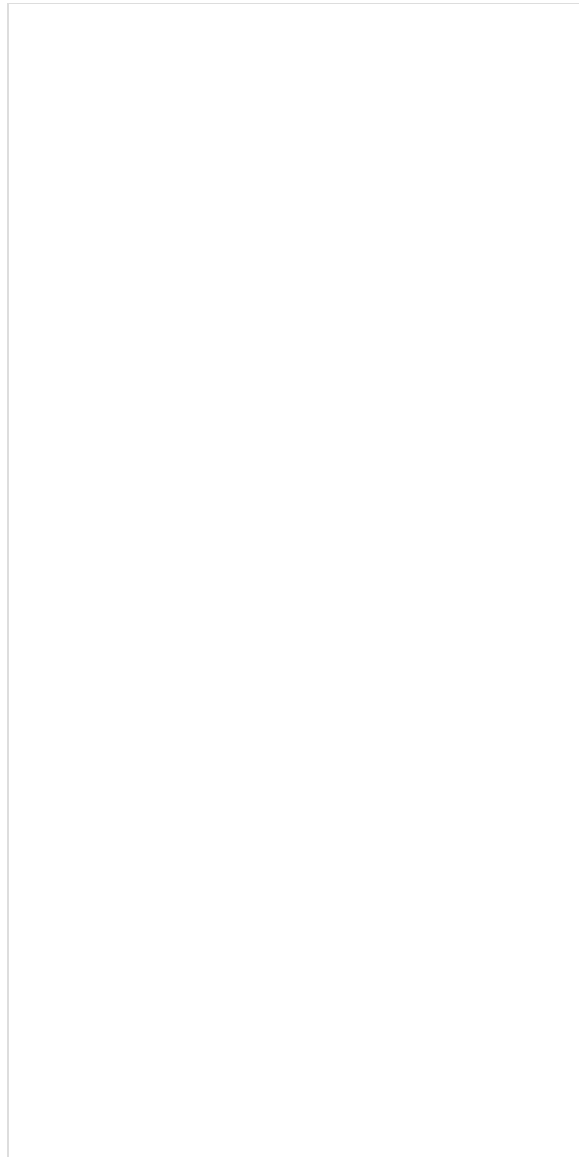
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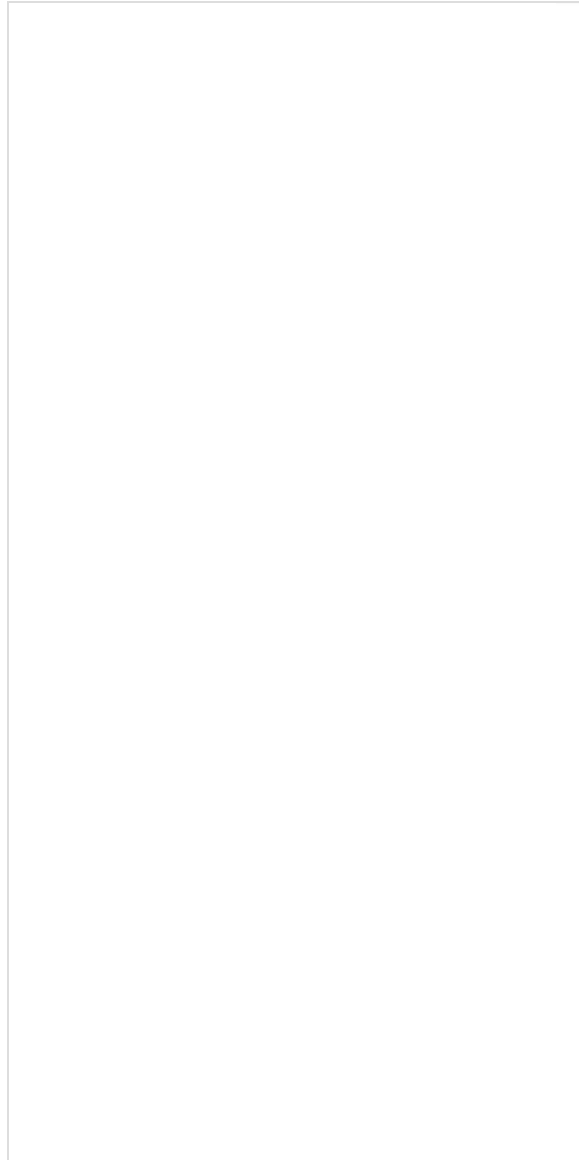
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