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Czech Republic: First cases of COVID-19 confirmed March 1 /update 1

3-4 minutes

Event

On Sunday, March 1, officials announced the first confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the Czech Republic. According to health officials, the three individuals- two in [Prague](#) and one in [Ústí nad Labem](#)- had recently traveled to northern Italy. The patients are currently under medical surveillance.

Further international spread of COVID-19 is expected over the coming days and weeks.

Context

The first case of COVID-19 was reported on December 31 and the source of the outbreak has been linked to a wet market in Wuhan (Hubei province, China). Human-to-human and patient-to-medical staff transmission of the virus have been confirmed. Many of the associated fatalities have been due to pneumonia caused by the virus.

Cases of the virus have been confirmed in numerous countries and territories worldwide. Virus-screening and quarantining

measures are being implemented at airports worldwide, as well as extensive travel restrictions. On February 28, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the risk of spread and the risk of impact of the virus is "very high" at the global level.

Pneumonia symptoms include dry cough, chest pain, fever, and labored breathing. Pneumonia can be contagious and can be transmitted from human to human. The influenza virus, or the flu, is a common cause of viral pneumonia.

Advice

To reduce the risk of transmission, travelers are advised to abide by the following measures:

- Frequently clean hands by applying an alcohol-based hand rub or washing with soap and water.
- When coughing and sneezing, cover mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue; if used, throw the tissue away immediately and wash hands.
- If experiencing a fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care urgently and share your previous travel history with your health care provider.

In the case that symptoms suggestive of respiratory illness emerge either during or after travel, travelers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share their travel history with their health care provider. Travelers returning from China, South Korea, Italy, and Iran who develop symptoms of pneumonia are advised to call emergency services before going to the doctor or hospital to prevent the potential spread of the disease.

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