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# Brazil confirms first coronavirus case in Latin America

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3 minutes



General view of the Albert Einstein Hospital, where what would be the first case of coronavirus in Brazil was detected, in Sao Paulo, Brazil [Sebastiao Moreira/EPA]

Brazil's Health Ministry on Wednesday confirmed the first case of a fast-spreading new coronavirus in Latin America, diagnosing a 61-year-old man in Sao Paulo who returned recently from [Italy](#).

The diagnosis comes during Brazil's carnival holiday, a peak time for domestic travel when millions of revellers throng to major cities

for raucous street celebrations.

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The patient, a Sao Paulo resident, had travelled to Lombardy, in northern Italy, from February 9 to February 21 and had symptoms compatible with the disease, the ministry said in a statement.

Italy has been hardest hit by the outbreak in Europe, with more than 350 cases reported and 11 deaths.

The first Brazilian patient remains in good health and will be monitored in isolation for the next 14 days, the Albert Einstein Hospital in Sao Paulo said in a written statement.

Brazilian sanitary agency Anvisa said it had requested a list of the passengers on his same flight from Italy to [Brazil](#).

Brazil's Health Ministry is tracking 20 suspected cases of the new coronavirus, officials said, as travellers return from Asia and Europe.

The new coronavirus is believed to have originated in a market selling wildlife in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last year.

In mainland China, 2,715 people have died from [COVID-19](#), as the illness is officially known, while more than 78,064 infections have been confirmed, according to the World Health Organization.

Concerns about the economic effects of the disease have wiped out more than three trillion dollars of value on tumbling stock markets over the past four trading sessions.

Brazil's stock market, which has been closed since last week due to the carnival holiday, is set to open at 1pm local time (16:00 GMT) on Wednesday. Brazilian shares in exchange-traded funds in New York have dropped nearly 6 percent this week.

SOURCE: Reuters news agency