

University of Toledo Medical Center
Infectious Disease Update
Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)
Dr. J. Westerink

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is viral respiratory illness first reported in Saudi Arabia in 2012. It is caused by a [coronavirus](#) called MERS-CoV. Most people who have been confirmed to have MERS-CoV infection developed severe acute respiratory illness. So far, all the cases have been linked to countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula. **No cases have been identified in the U.S.** This virus has spread from ill people to others through close contact.

Signs and Symptoms

Acute respiratory illness with fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ and cough

Clinical or radiologic evidence of pneumonia or ARDS

Travel from the Arabian Peninsula or neighboring countries 14 days before illness

Other symptoms: Chills, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, dyspnea, vomiting, abd pain, and diarrhea

What specimens would I need for diagnosis of MERS?

CDC recommends collecting multiple specimens from different sites at different times after symptom onset, if possible. Respiratory specimens should be collected as soon as possible after symptoms begin – ideally within 7 days and before antiviral medications are administered.

Bronchoalveolar lavage, tracheal aspirate, pleural fluid is preferred, or sputum specimen

Nasopharyngeal AND oropharyngeal swabs

Serum for serology and rRT-PCR testing

Stool specimen

Specimens will be sent to the Ohio Dept of Health

For complete guidelines on collecting and handling specimens see:

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/downloads/guidelines-clinical-specimens.pdf>

Infection Control Measures for suspected cases of MERS in clinic or private office

Place facemask on patient.

Place patient in single/private room

Limit number of persons entering room

Hand hygiene

Infection Control Measures for suspected cases of MERS in the acute care setting:

Airborne Infection Isolation Room (AIIR)

Hand hygiene

Only essential staff should enter room

Standard, airborne, and contact precautions. (eye protection is mandatory)

Limit transport of patient outside of room