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Coronavirus patients confirmed in Los Angeles and Orange counties



In this file photo, a sales clerk at a pharmacy rings up a purchase of face masks as fears of the coronavirus continues, Friday, Jan 24, 2020 in Chicago. A Chicago woman had become the second U.S. patient diagnosed with the dangerous new virus from China, health officials announced Friday. Late Saturday, officials announced a confirmed case in Orange County, California. (Antonio Perez/Chicago Tribune via AP)

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Two cases of [coronavirus](#) were confirmed in Southern California, one each in Los Angeles and Orange counties, bringing to five the number of cases across the U.S., health officials said Sunday, Jan. 26.

All of the patients were people who traveled to the Chinese city of Wuhan, identified as the center of the outbreak. The U.S. patients generally have been reported to be in good condition and were hospitalized in isolation for monitoring.

The Orange County patient, identified as a man in his 50s, continued in good condition Sunday while being treated in isolation at an undisclosed hospital, said Dr. Nichole Quick, the Orange County Health Officer. She said he was “a traveler from Wuhan who is currently staying in Orange County.”

Quick’s agency, along with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the California Department of Public Health, were investigating contacts with the patient. “We do believe at this time that there are limited number of contacts to follow up,” she said by phone Sunday.



Dr. Nichole Quick (Courtesy Orange County Health Care Agency)

The patient had visited a medical facility with symptoms that prompted a test for the coronavirus, Quick said. The CDC on Saturday had confirmed the Orange County patient had the virus.

Her agency said the current risk of local transmission from the patient “remains low,” and there was no evidence of person-to-person transmission in Orange County. Information about the coronavirus is on the OC agency’s website [here](#).

Two new cases were reported Sunday — one in Los Angeles County in California and the other in Maricopa County, Arizona. The latter case was someone with ties to Arizona State University who did not live in school housing, state health officials said.

Los Angeles County officials said the patient, identified as a returning traveler from Wuhan, “presented themselves for care once they noticed that they were not feeling well.”

That person, who was not further identified, “is currently receiving medical treatment,” according to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

“There is no immediate threat to the general public, no special precautions are required, and people should not be excluded from activities based on their race, country of origin, or recent travel if they do not have symptoms of respiratory illness,” the statement said.

The virus can cause fever, coughing, wheezing and pneumonia. It is a member of the coronavirus family that’s a close cousin to the deadly SARS and MERS viruses that have caused outbreaks in the past.

Dozens of people have died from the virus in China, which has issued massive travel bans in hard-hit sections of that country to try to stem spread of the virus. The U.S. consulate in Wuhan announced Sunday that it would evacuate its personnel and some private citizens aboard a charter flight.

The CDC expects many more Americans to be diagnosed with the newly discovered virus, which is believed to have an incubation period of about two weeks, as worldwide the number of confirmed cases nears 2,000.

The CDC is screening passengers on direct and connecting flights from Wuhan at five major airports in Atlanta, Chicago, New York City, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

CDC officials noted Sunday that more than two dozen people who had been suspected of having the illness ended up testing negative.

Chinese President Xi Jinping called the outbreak a grave situation, and the government stepped up efforts to restrict travel and public gatherings while rushing medical staff and supplies to Wuhan, which remains on lockdown.

The latest figures reported Sunday morning cover the previous 24 hours and mark an increase of 15 deaths and 688 cases for a total of 1,975 infections.

The government also reported five cases in Hong Kong, two in Macao and three in Taiwan. Small numbers of cases have been found in Thailand, Japan, South Korea, the U.S., Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Nepal, France and Australia.

Canada said it discovered its first case, the man is his 50s who recently flew from Wuhan to Guangzhou, China, and then on to Toronto.

The Associated Press and City News Service contributed to this article.

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A journalist since 1975, for City News Service in Los Angeles, The Associated Press in Los Angeles and New York, and The Press-Enterprise, Richard DeAtley has been Entertainment Editor, a features writer, courts and breaking news reporter. He is currently a business reporter for The P-E. He is a Cal State Long Beach graduate, lifelong Southern Californian (except for that time in New York -- which was great!), he has been in Riverside since 1992, and has watched and reported as a great community grew into its own identity.

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