



MEMORANDUM

TO: All Physicians, Residents, Nurses, and Laboratory Technologists at St. Joseph's Healthcare and Hamilton Health Sciences

FROM: Infection Prevention & Control, Drs. M. Loeb, D. Mertz, & C. Lee

RE: Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) Coronavirus; H7N9 Influenza

DATE: May 14, 2014

When patients present with new onset of respiratory symptoms: cough and/or shortness of breath associated with fever > 38 °C, it is essential to ask about a recent travel history especially to Middle East or to China to consider underlying MERS or H7N9 Influenza. There are reported cases of MERS in the US in returning travellers from Saudi Arabia.

Information on emerging viruses and the geographic areas at risk can be found at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/CORONAVIRUS/MERS/INDEX.HTML>

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/notices-avis/index-eng.php>

Immediately notify Infection Prevention & Control and the microbiology laboratory whenever there is a potential case of MERS-CoV or novel strains of influenza (H7N9).

All laboratory specimens except for blood vacutainer tubes must be clearly marked with an **"Alert Additional Laboratory Precaution"** yellow sticker with the name of the suspected virus indicated on the sticker. The Yellow Alert stickers can be obtained from **Infection Prevention & Control** at Hamilton Health Sciences and St. Joseph's Health Care.

To order MERS-CoV, use the codes STAR 87020 or Meditech MERSI. For further information refer to the Lab Test Information Guide (LTIG) on the intranet.



Novel Virus
Surveillance Protocol