

Beat: Health

China reports 2nd case of new H10N8 bird flu virus

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USPA News - A second person in eastern China has contracted a strain of avian influenza that had never been transmitted to humans before, health authorities confirmed on Sunday. It comes at a time when the number of cases from another bird flu virus are also on the rise.

The patient, a 55-year-old woman surnamed Zhang, who lives in Nanchang, the capital of eastern Jiangxi province, became ill on January 8 with symptoms that included a sore throat, dizziness, and fatigue. She was hospitalized on January 15 and remains in a critical condition, the provincial Health and Family Planning Commission said. "On January 25, an expert of the National Health and Family Planning Commission confirmed the diagnosis of H10N8 avian influenza," the provincial commission said in a statement on Sunday. It added that the woman had visited a poultry market on January 4 where she could have contracted the illness, but none of her close friends or relatives have reported feeling ill. The new H10N8 case comes just over a month after Chinese health authorities confirmed the world's first ever human case of the bird flu strain. The virus had previously been found in wild and domestic birds in China, as well as in birds in Italy, the United States, Canada, South Korea, Sweden and Japan since 1965. The first case involved a 73-year-old woman also from Jiangxi province. The woman, who had many underlying medical conditions and visited a live bird market four days before becoming ill, was hospitalized on November 30 and died on December 6. None of her close contacts became ill. The World Health Organization (WHO) previously said additional human cases of H10N8 are possible because it had previously been detected in wild birds and poultry. "Given the potentially unpredictable behavior of influenza viruses, vigilance and close monitoring is needed," said WHO spokesperson Helen Yu. The new case comes at a time when China has reported a sharp increase in the number of H7N9 bird flu cases, another strain that had never been detected in humans until early 2013. China's mainland has since reported 237 human cases of H7N9 avian influenza, the majority in eastern Zhejiang province, and nearly 100 of them this month alone.

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