

Swine flu cases confirmed in Europe, U.S. and Canada

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(CNN) -- The first case of swine flu in Europe was confirmed Monday in Spain as a top European health official warned against travel to Mexico and the United States.

Spanish health minister Trinidad Jimenez said a 23-year-old man who returned from studying in Mexico last Wednesday tested positive for the virus at a hospital in Albacete, southeastern Spain.

At least 16 more cases are being treated as possible swine flu, Jimenez told a news conference. Earlier, Jimenez met with health officials to discuss Spain's response to the crisis.

"We do not have an emergency situation in Spain, but we are working to prevent any possible development, and we are taking action in accord with the World Health Organization," she said.

[Spain's](#) Ministry of Health has urged travelers recently returned from Mexico and the U.S. to be on the lookout for symptoms of the virus, including fever, coughing and respiratory problems.

The European Union's health commissioner Monday called on people to avoid traveling to both Mexico and the U.S. amid growing concern that the swine flu virus, which has been blamed for at least 103 deaths in Mexico as well as hundreds more cases of infection, could become a global pandemic.

People "should avoid traveling to Mexico or the U.S. unless it is very urgent for them," Andorra Vassiliou said.

Dr. Richard Besser, acting director of the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said Vassiliou's warning was "not warranted."

U.S. President Barack Obama said Monday that the outbreak was a "cause for concern" but not a "cause for alarm."

He said the federal government was "closely monitoring" emerging cases and had declared a public health emergency as a "precautionary tool" to ensure the availability of adequate resources to combat the spread of the virus.

The World Health Organization has described the outbreak as a "public health emergency of international concern." It said the U.S. has confirmed 40 cases, Mexico 26, Canada six and Spain one

Sources: CNN