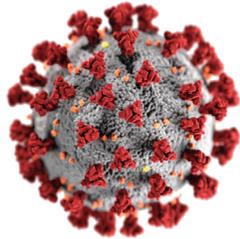


COVID-19 IN NEW ZEALAND

17 APRIL 2020



COVID-19 is the disease caused by a novel coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. It is a respiratory infection that can affect your lungs and airways. The latest COVID-19 health advice can be found on the [Ministry of Health webpage](#).

This report summarises COVID-19 cases reported in New Zealand from **30 January 2020 to 17 April 2020**.

[Click here](#) for the ESR COVID-19 dashboard.



Number of cases

There have been a total of **1423 cases of COVID-19** reported in New Zealand. This total number is made up of confirmed and probable cases.

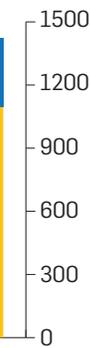
328 probable cases

1095 confirmed cases

1432

328

1095



Confirmed cases are patients who have had COVID-19 confirmed by a laboratory test. Probable cases are patients whose laboratory test for COVID-19 is inconclusive but either a doctor believes they have symptoms of COVID-19 (and has ruled out any other causes) or they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19.

Cases of COVID-19 have been reported in every district health board (DHB) across the country. The highest number of cases have been reported in Southern, Waikato, Auckland and Waitemata DHBs.

On 1 April 2020, the case definition for COVID-19 was broadened, meaning that more people met the criteria to be tested. Before this time, testing had largely been focused on people with link to international travel or those in close contact with a case. The broadened case definition will help to improve the understanding of the extent of community transmission in New Zealand.

Reported numbers of cases of COVID-19 have been declining in every DHB since the week beginning 28 March 2020, despite more people being tested.

Confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases by district health board

Count of cases by earliest recorded date

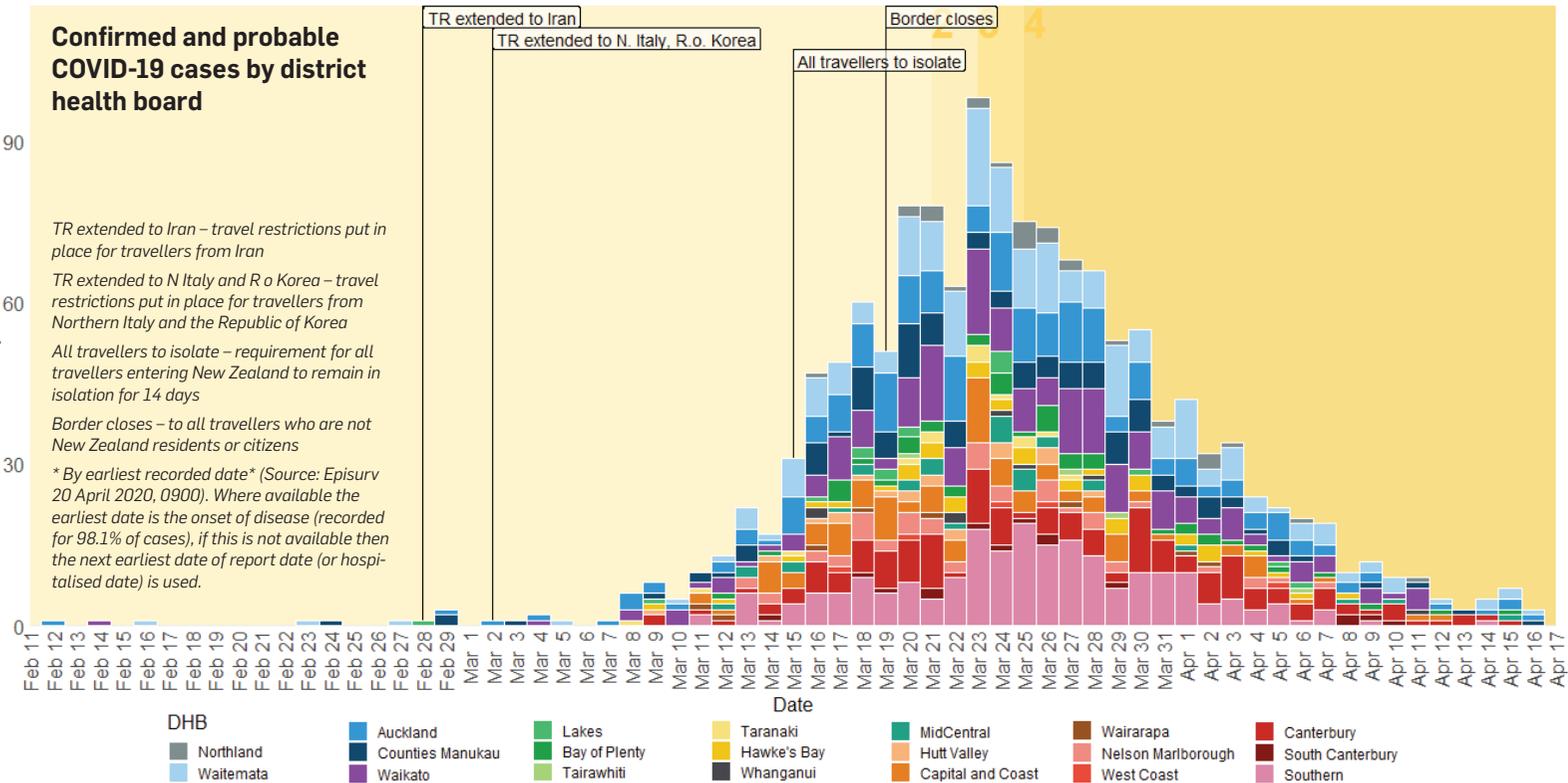
TR extended to Iran – travel restrictions put in place for travellers from Iran

TR extended to N Italy and R o Korea – travel restrictions put in place for travellers from Northern Italy and the Republic of Korea

All travellers to isolate – requirement for all travellers entering New Zealand to remain in isolation for 14 days

Border closes – to all travellers who are not New Zealand residents or citizens

** By earliest recorded date* (Source: EpiSurv 20 April 2020, 0900). Where available the earliest date is the onset of disease (recorded for 98.1% of cases), if this is not available then the next earliest date of report date (or hospitalised date) is used.*



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Who has been infected?

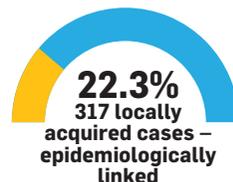
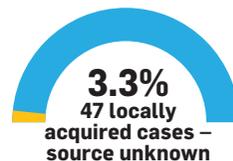
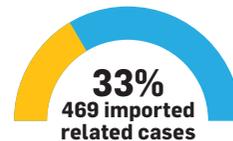
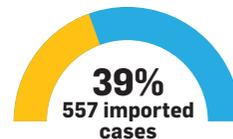
- Many of our cases have been in people returning from overseas. As expected, with the influx of people returning to New Zealand ahead of the enhanced border restrictions, COVID-19 cases in returning travellers peaked on 21 March. Most of these travellers are aged 20–34 years, are of European or Other ethnicity and live in less socioeconomically deprived areas of New Zealand.
- However, most of our cases have been in people that acquired COVID-19 in New Zealand (either linked to a person who became infected overseas or linked with another case who acquired the infection from an unknown source). This contact has often occurred within households. Amongst this group of cases there is a higher number of cases in females, the younger age groups and among those reporting Māori and Pacific peoples ethnicity. These differences are in part influenced by the outbreaks that we have experienced. For example, the higher number of younger age people is due of the outbreak associated with a college, which included many people in the 5-19 year age group.

What was the source of infection?

The source of infection of COVID-19 is assigned to one of these 4 categories:

- **Imported cases:** Patients who reported international travel within 14 days prior to the start of their of symptoms – **557 cases (39%)**
- **Import related cases:** Patients that have a reported link (e.g. are a close contact) to an imported case – **469 cases (33%)**
- **Locally acquired cases, source unknown:** Patients that have no reported history of international travel within 14 days prior to the start of their symptoms and have no recorded link to a case – **47 cases (3.3%)**
- **Locally acquired cases, epidemiologically linked:** Patients that have a reported link (e.g. are a close contact) to a locally acquired case that has an unknown source – **317 cases (22.3%)**

The source of infection for some recently reported cases is still under investigation, those numbers are not included here.



What are the most commonly reported symptoms?

- Information on patients symptoms is available for 1350 of our cases. The most common symptom reported was cough, followed by fever, sore throat and headache. Twenty cases were reported as having no symptoms.
- In New Zealand, the proportion of infected people who have severe disease (have been hospitalised, have been admitted to Intensive Care or have died) is less than has been seen in other countries. Seventy-one people have been hospitalised, 6 have been admitted to Intensive Care and 12 people have died.
- Generally, COVID-19 is more severe in older people and those with underlying medical conditions. In New Zealand, the majority of our cases are in people aged under 65. Only around 24% of patients report an underlying medical condition; most commonly cardiovascular disease, diabetes or chronic lung disease. This likely accounts for the lower rate of severe disease we have seen in patients in New Zealand, compared to other countries.

Outbreaks and clusters of COVID-19

- Household clusters are linked cases that are confined to a single household group. Many cases in New Zealand have been part of household clusters. This is to be expected given the public health measures that have been in place during alert Level 3 and Level 4 since 24 March 2020.
- Outbreaks are linked cases that have spread beyond a household group. To date, there have been 33 outbreaks, involving 625 cases (44% of all cases).
 - Sixteen of these outbreaks are linked to international travel.
 - Sixteen outbreaks have included cases in more than one district health board.
 - The largest outbreaks have been in Southern (a wedding, 96 cases), Waikato (a hospitality venue, 75 cases) and Auckland (a college, 93 cases).

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Demographic breakdown of confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases by source

Demographics	Imported case	Import-related	Locally acquired, epidemiologically linked	Locally acquired case, unknown source	Total
Total	557	469	317	47	1423
Sex					
Female	272	263	205	23	781
Male	284	206	112	24	641
Unknown	1	0	0	0	1
Age groups (yrs)					
<1	0	2	1	0	4
1-4	1	11	5	0	17
5-19	16	52	56	1	125
20-34	251	124	84	12	480
35-49	89	104	78	10	287
50-64	125	118	58	17	327
65-79	72	44	18	7	148
>80 years	3	14	17	0	35
Ethnic group					
Māori	28	66	21	4	123
Pacific peoples	11	15	33	2	64
Asian	41	32	76	7	159
European or Other	467	352	179	33	1053
Unknown	10	4	8	1	24
At least one underlying health condition	129	118	67	18	339
Hospitalised	24	23	14	4	71

* Total includes all cases including cases where source is under investigation.

‡ EpiSurv derived ethnicity data has been used in these analyses.

