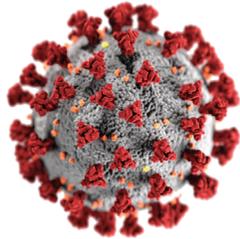


COVID-19 IN NEW ZEALAND

29 MAY 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 all reported COVID-19 cases reported in New Zealand from **30 January 2020 to 29 May 2020**.

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

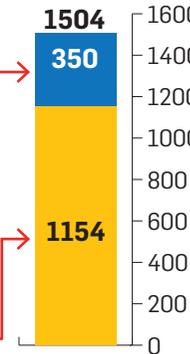


Number of cases

There have been **1504 confirmed (1154) and probable (350) cases of COVID-19** reported in New Zealand.

350 probable cases

1154 confirmed cases

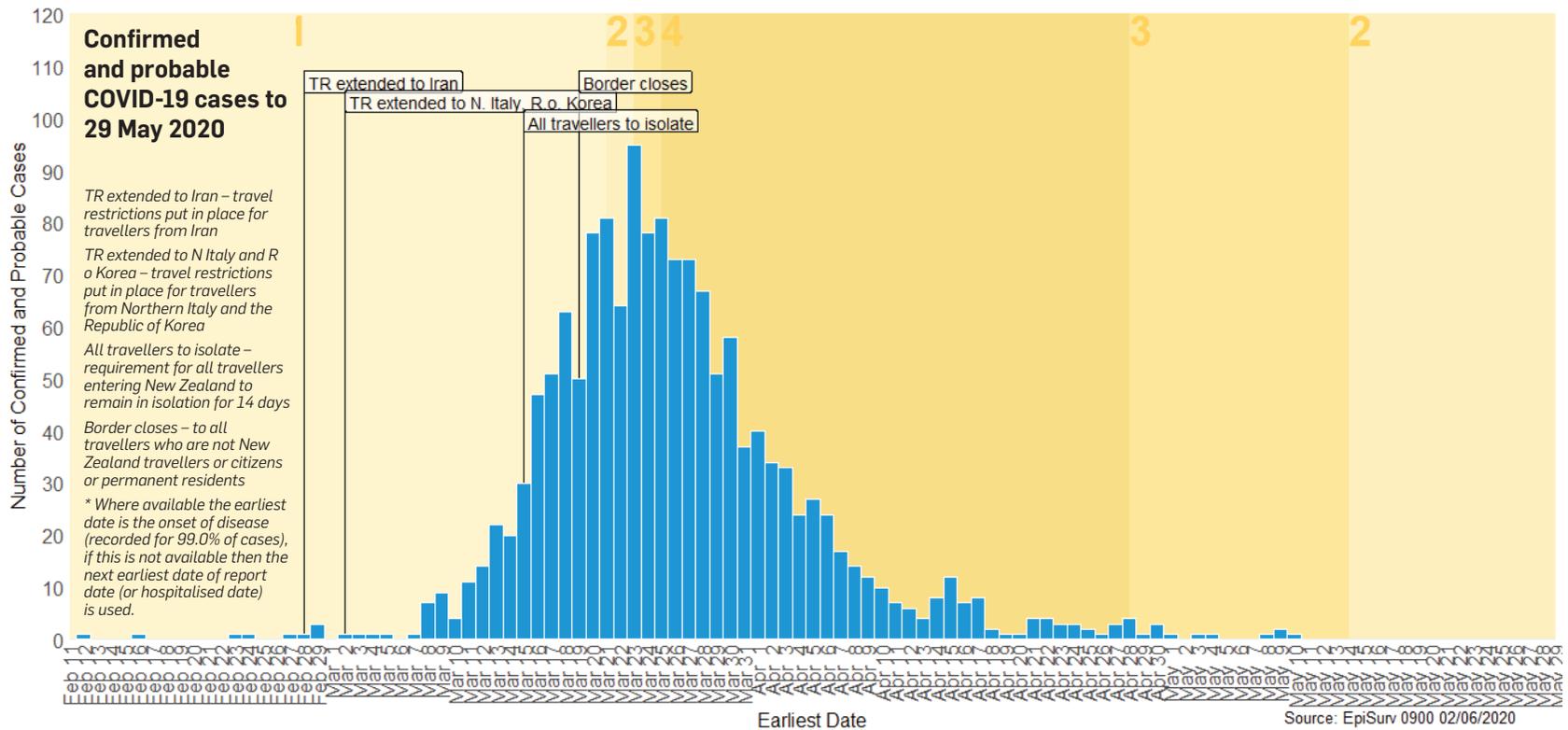


Confirmed cases are patients who have had COVID-19 confirmed by a laboratory test. Probable cases are patients whose laboratory test for COVID-19 is inconclusive but either a doctor believes they have symptoms of COVID-19 (and has ruled out any other causes) or they have been in close contact with someone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

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

On 1 April 2020, the case definition for COVID-19 was broadened. 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.

The number of new cases reported has decreased dramatically since late March in line with public health measures taken and despite more people being tested.



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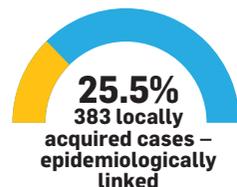
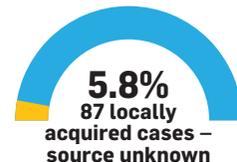
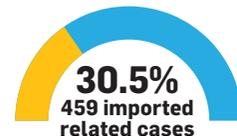
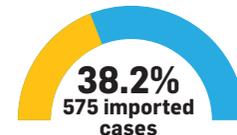
Who has been infected?

- 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 were aged 20–34 years, 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 have been in contact with a person who became infected overseas. In this group there is a higher number of cases in females, the younger age groups, among those reporting Māori and Pacific peoples ethnicity and people in more socioeconomically deprived areas of New Zealand. These differences are influenced by the outbreaks we have experienced. For example, the higher number of younger people is due to an outbreak associated with a college, which included many people in the 5–19 years age group.

What was the source of infection?

The source of infection for COVID-19 cases is assigned to one of these four categories.

- **Imported cases:** Cases with a reported history of international travel within 14 days of the start of their symptoms – **575 cases (38.2%)**.
- **Import-related cases:** Cases that have a reported link (e.g. are a close contact) to an imported case – **459 cases (30.5%)**
- **Locally acquired case, source unknown:** Cases that have no reported history of international travel within 14 days prior to the start of their symptoms and have no reported link to another case – **87 cases (5.8%)**.
- **Locally acquired case, epidemiologically linked:** Cases that have a reported link (e.g. are a close contact) to a locally acquired case that has an unknown source – **383 cases (25.5%)**.



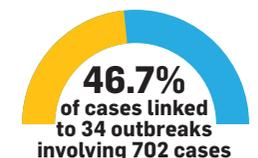
Over time, some cases may move between categories (for example from “locally acquired, source unknown” to “locally acquired, epidemiologically linked”) as investigations continues and further information is identified.

What are the most commonly reported symptoms?

- The most common symptom reported was cough, followed by headache, sore throat and fever. Fifty one patients were initially reported as having no symptoms (asymptomatic). Of those, twenty six patients went on to develop symptoms later on.
- The proportion of infected people in New Zealand who have severe outcomes (i.e. have been hospitalised, have been admitted to Intensive Care or have died) is less than has been seen in other countries. Ninety-five people have been hospitalised, ten have been admitted to the Intensive Care Unit, and twenty-two people have died.
- Generally, COVID-19 is more severe in older people and those with underlying medical conditions. People were more likely to be hospitalised if they had an underlying health condition. The most commonly reported underlying conditions are cardiovascular disease, diabetes or chronic lung disease. Eleven of the people who have died had an underlying health condition and all but one were aged over 65 years.
- In New Zealand, the majority of our cases are in people aged under 65 years, with over 85% of patients not reporting an underlying medical condition. This likely accounts for the lower number of patients with severe outcomes 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. Over half the cases in New Zealand (55.8%) have been part of household clusters (839 cases in 322 households). This is expected given the public health measures in place during Level 3 and Level 4 from 25 March to 12 May.
- There have been 36 cases under 15 years old that have been part of a household cluster. Five of these cases were the first person in their household to report symptoms.
- To date, there have been 34 outbreaks, involving **702 cases (46.7% of all cases)**.
 - Eighteen of these outbreaks are linked to international travel.
 - Eighteen outbreaks have included cases in more than one district health board.
 - The largest outbreaks have been in Southern (a wedding, 98 cases), Auckland (a college, 96 cases) and Waikato (a hospitality venue, 77 cases).



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Demographic breakdown of confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases to 29 May 2020 by source (Source: EpiSurv 25 May 2020, 0900)

Demographics	Imported case ¹	Import-related ²	Locally acquired, epidemiologically linked ³	Locally acquired case, unknown source ⁴	Total ⁵
Total	575	459	383	87	1504
Sex					
Female	285	253	251	48	837
Male	290	206	132	39	667
Unknown					
Age groups (yrs)					
<1	0	1	3	0	4
1-4	1	9	7	1	18
5-19	15	54	66	0	135
20-34	258	121	109	20	508
35-49	90	101	89	19	299
50-64	132	120	64	28	344
65-79	76	38	26	17	157
≥80	3	15	19	2	39
Ethnic group*					
Māori	33	65	27	9	134
Pacific peoples	11	11	51	6	79
Asian	39	34	99	12	184
European or Other	484	347	204	56	1091
Unknown	8	2	2	4	16
At least one underlying condition†	70	60	55	13	198
Hospitalised	30	23	32	10	95
Health worker	35	44	95	8	182

¹ Imported cases: Cases with a reported history of international travel within 14 days of onset.

² Import related cases: Cases that have a reported link (close contact or epidemiological link) to an imported case.

³ Locally acquired case, epidemiologically linked: Cases that have a reported link (close contact or other epidemiological link) to a locally acquired case with unknown source.

⁴ Locally acquired case, source unknown: Cases that have no

reported history of international travel within 14 days of onset and no recorded epidemiological link to a source case.

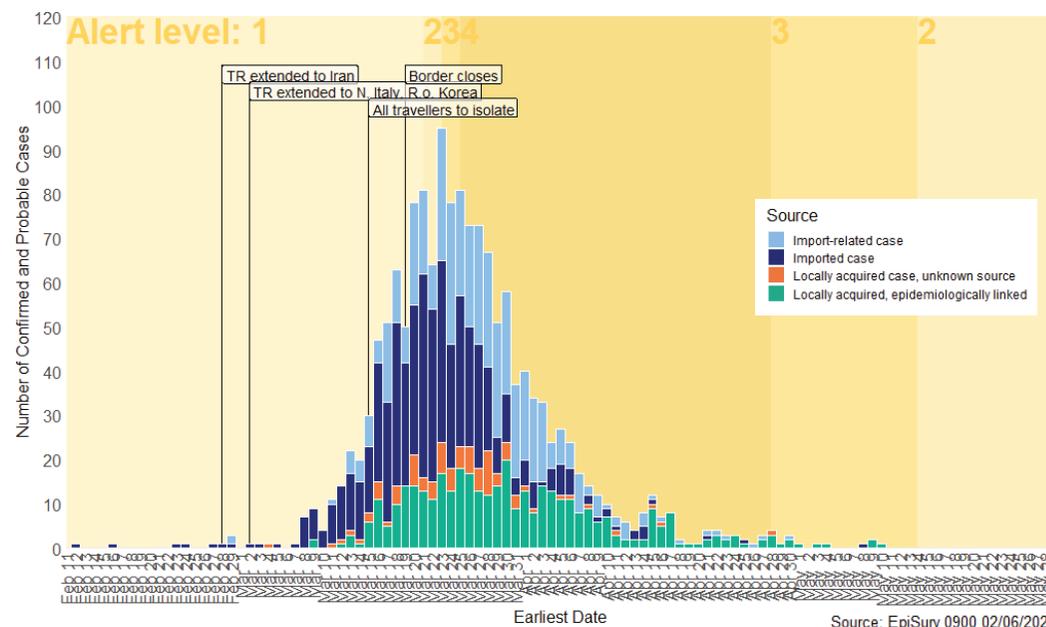
⁵ Total includes all cases including 3 cases where source is under investigation.

* NHI derived ethnicity data has been used in these analyses.

† New Zealand Deprivation Index 2013 (NZDep2013).

‡ Does not include 'other' underlying conditions.

Source of confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases to 29 May 2020



For further epidemiological analysis please refer to ESR's COVID-19 Epidemiology Reports.

Updated: 28/05/20 09:00 AM

