

# CHP investigates outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection at residential care home for persons with disabilities

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (August 18) investigating an outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) at a residential care home for persons with disabilities in Kwun Tong, and appeals to members of the public and staff of institutions to stay alert and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene.

The outbreak involves nine male and seven female residents aged 28 to 63, as well as five staff members. They developed symptoms since August 7. Seventeen of them sought medical attention and among them, two required hospitalisation. One of them tested positive for respiratory syncytial virus upon laboratory testing. All of them are in stable condition.

The CHP has provided preventive advice against URTI to the residential care home for persons with disabilities, such as advising the centre to arrange cleaning and disinfection, to open windows where appropriate for better ventilation and to separate affected residents from other residents, etc. The residential care home for persons with disabilities has been placed under medical surveillance.

The public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against influenza and other respiratory illnesses, and note the following:

- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination for personal protection;
- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- For high-risk persons (e.g. persons with underlying medical conditions or persons who are immunocompromised), wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub;
- Cover the nose and mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from

work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and

- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

Members of the public, particularly children, the elderly and those with chronic diseases, should consult a doctor promptly if they develop symptoms of respiratory tract infection.

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## [Appeal for information on missing man in Shum Shui Po \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (August 18) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Shum Shui Po.

Leung Ka-wai, aged 24, went missing after he was seen at a shopping mall on Yen Chow Street yesterday afternoon (August 17). His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.73 metres tall, 65 kilograms in weight and of thin build. He has a long face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing a black T-shirt, beige trousers and black shoes.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Persons Unit of Kowloon West on 3661 8036 or 9020 6542 or email to [rmpu-kw@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-kw@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.



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## Government elaborates on Mpox control strategy in Hong Kong and urges public to maintain vigilance against Mpox

In response to media enquiries and reports about the isolation arrangement for Mpox patients, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (August 18) emphasised that the key control strategies for Mpox are in line with the recommendation of the World Health Organization (WHO), and are necessary at this stage to safeguard public health in Hong Kong.

Currently, confirmed Mpox cases would be isolated/cohorted together in the isolation wards of public hospitals, until all infectious lesions are resolved and the patients become non-infectious. This is to eliminate any chance that confirmed Mpox cases could further spread the disease in the community and to ensure that the public would not be exposed to the risk of Mpox infection.

"The suggestion by some quarters that Mpox infections pose little health hazard and transmission risk, and the inference that the control measures currently in place are disproportionate or unnecessary, are counterproductive to stopping the spread of the Mpox infection in Hong Kong and are untenable and irresponsible from the public health perspective," a Government spokesman said.

"The WHO recommends transmission-based precautions for suspected or confirmed Mpox cases; screening, triage, early recognition and isolation measures in health facilities. Containment approach based on the WHO's recommendation aiming to cut transmission links in the community has also been adopted by other health authorities," the spokesman added.

For hospital isolation, the Hospital Authority (HA) is committed to providing comprehensive and effective treatment for Mpox patients, including the appropriate prescription of antiviral drugs based on their individual clinical needs. In addition, if necessary, public hospitals will also facilitate psychological assessments and management for Mpox patients. In general, the HA would arrange for Mpox patients to stay in the same room for the purpose of isolation. The sharing of bathroom facilities among patients suffering from the same infectious disease etiology is in accordance with infection control principle, and will not affect individual recovery progress or disease control strategy.

As at yesterday (August 17), a total of 32 Mpox cases were reported to the CHP. An upsurge of cases is observed starting from July with 24 cases (75 per cent) reported since then. The Government will continue to assess the risk and adjust corresponding prevention and control measures for Mpox

according to the latest scientific evidence and developments, as well as the latest recommendations from the WHO.

The spokesman added, "Vaccination is an effective way to prevent Mpox. Members of the public are also strongly advised against practising high-risk sexual activities, including unprotected sex, promiscuity or sex with unknown persons."

The Mpox vaccination programme for high-risk groups commenced on October 5 last year. As at August 17, a total of over 11 700 doses have been administered. The spokesman strongly appeals to high-risk individuals to receive Mpox vaccination. Free Mpox vaccination is available at the designated Mpox vaccination centre (situated at 2/F, CHP building, 147C Argyle Street, Mong Kok) by appointment through email ([mpv\\_booking@dh.gov.hk](mailto:mpv_booking@dh.gov.hk)) or telephone booking line (2547 1900) during office hours. They can also receive Mpox walk-in vaccinations at all of the DH's Social Hygiene Service Clinics. Further information of the clinics including their locations is available at [www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele\\_chc/tele\\_chc\\_shcf.html](http://www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcf.html) and [www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele\\_chc/tele\\_chc\\_shcm.html](http://www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcm.html).

Meanwhile, the DH's Integrated Treatment Centre in Kowloon Bay, and the HA's Special Medical Clinics at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital will continue to provide Mpox vaccination services for their clients.

The Government also reminded the public, especially those subject to high risks of exposure, to take precautions and avoid close physical contact with persons or animals suspected of infection. They should seek medical attention as soon as possible if they experience relevant symptoms, including rashes, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle pain, and severe headaches.

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## [Hong Kong Customs detects large-scale illicit cigarette smuggling case with seizure worth about \\$62 million \(with photo\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs detected a large-scale illicit cigarette smuggling case on August 15 and seized about 17 million suspected illicit cigarettes at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound. The estimated market value was about \$62 million with a duty potential of about \$42 million.

Through risk assessment and intelligence analysis, Customs selected and inspected two 40-foot seaborne containers, arriving in Hong Kong from

Cambodia and declared as carrying dried cassava, that morning. Upon inspection, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes inside the containers.

An investigation is ongoing. Customs will continue to trace the source and flow of the illicit cigarettes.

Including the suspected illicit cigarettes seized in this operation, Customs had seized about 470 million suspected illicit cigarettes this year as at yesterday (August 17). Customs will continue its risk assessment and intelligence analysis for interception at source as well as through its multipronged enforcement strategy targeting storage, distribution and peddling to spare no effort in combating illicit cigarette activities.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Customs reminds members of the public that it is an offence to buy or sell illicit cigarettes. Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/)).



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## [Update on dengue fever](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (August 18) reported the latest number of dengue fever (DF) cases, and urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From August 11 to yesterday (August 17), the CHP recorded three imported DF cases. Among them, two patients have been to Thailand and one to Cambodia during the incubation period.

As of yesterday, 28 imported cases of DF had been recorded in 2023. In 2022, 26 imported cases of DF were recorded.

The latest surveillance data shows that there is an increase in DF cases noted in some places in Asia (such as Bangladesh, Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand) and South America compared to the same period last year, and the trend is rising. Members of the public, while travelling abroad, should stay vigilant and carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures. Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong, as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas, has been uploaded to the CHP's website ([www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df\\_imported\\_cases\\_and\\_overseas\\_figures\\_eng.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf)).

"Apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children\*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

\* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

â€‹The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).