

CHP announces latest situations and measures on imported cases of novel coronavirus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (January 23) continuing its investigations on two imported cases of novel coronavirus infection and has revised the reporting criteria for suspected cases and enhanced the measures of health declaration form. The public is again urged to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene both locally and during travel.

Regarding the two highly suspected imported cases of novel coronavirus infection announced yesterday (January 22) and in the early hours today, the patients' respiratory samples were confirmed positive for novel coronavirus by further testing. As such, the two cases have been confirmed as imported cases of novel coronavirus infection. The patients are now in stable condition.

The Lady MacLehose Holiday Village under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has been converted as quarantine centre today and close contacts would be transferred to the village for quarantine.

The CHP has immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing upon notifications of the cases yesterday. As of 4pm today, the progress on the contact tracing is as below:

	39-year-old male patient	56-year-old male patient
Close contacts	8 persons Among them, 3 close contacts in Hong Kong have been transferred to Lady MacLehose Holiday Village for quarantine. Five remaining close contacts not in Hong Kong are under surveillance and follow-up by relevant overseas health authorities.	4 persons Among them, 2 close contacts in Hong Kong will be transferred to Lady MacLehose Holiday Village for quarantine. Another close contact has been admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital before the quarantine centre is set up and will be transferred to quarantine centre when appropriate. 1 close contact has developed relevant symptoms and is regarded as a suspected case who has been taken to Tuen Mun Hospital for isolation and management.

Other contacts	<p>46 persons 6 of them have developed relevant symptoms and are regarded as suspected cases who have been taken to Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (4 cases), Queen Elizabeth Hospital (1 case) and Tuen Mun Hospital (1 case) for isolation and management.</p> <p>The remaining 40 asymptomatic contacts are under medical surveillance.</p>	<p>17 persons All contacts are asymptomatic and under medical surveillance.</p>
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Contact tracing by the CHP is ongoing. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts.

Separately, the CHP has conducted a health talk at Lee On Community Hall, Lee On Community Services Complex in Ma On Shan at 7pm today to give health advice on the prevention of pneumonia and respiratory tract infection to residents.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for the cases, which operates from 8am to 9pm daily to answer public enquiries. From 8pm last night to 4pm today, a total of 71 calls were received.

The CHP appealed to people who took the high-speed train from Wuhan to Shenzhenbei (G1015, carriage no. 3) and from Shenzhenbei to Hong Kong West Kowloon Station (G5607, carriage no. 2) on January 21, and people who took the flight CA8279 or taxi drivers who drove the patient (January 19, 5 pm from Heng On Estate to Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) and January 19, 11 pm from PWH to Oceanaire) to call the hotline.

In view of the latest situation and risk assessment, the CHP will enhance surveillance of suspected cases and revise the reporting criteria of Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent. Details are as follows:

Medical practitioners are requested to make a report to the CHP for further investigation if they encounter an individual with fever or acute respiratory illness, or pneumonia, and who had experienced one of the following within 14 days prior to the onset of symptoms: (a) visited Hubei Province (regardless of whether the individual had visited wet markets or seafood markets there); or (b) visited a medical hospital in the Mainland; or (c) had close contact with a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus while that patient was symptomatic.

After reviewing the latest situation, the DH will extend the health

declaration form system to cover the Hong Kong West Kowloon Station of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link starting tomorrow (January 24). All passengers arriving Hong Kong by High-Speed Rail will be required to complete and submit a health declaration form.

Regarding the latest situation in the Mainland and overseas, information of the latest notifications received will be updated to the CHP website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html) daily at 9am and 6pm.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP will continue to maintain its liaison with the National Health Commission, the World Health Organization and the relevant health authorities, and closely monitor the situation for risk assessment."

The spokesman advised the public to avoid unnecessary travel to Wuhan of Hubei Province. If it is unavoidable to travel to Wuhan, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong.

A dedicated webpage (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html) has been set up by the CHP to provide relevant information and health advice on Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent. Information on the affected countries/areas is available from the following webpage: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Avoid unnecessary travel to Wuhan of Hubei Province. If it is unavoidable to travel to Wuhan, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible community transmission of novel coronavirus infection. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.