

CHP appeals to public to take precautionary measures against carbon monoxide poisoning when using gas water heater

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 9) appealed to members of the public to take precautionary measures against carbon monoxide poisoning as a notification of a suspected case of carbon monoxide poisoning after the use of gas water heater was received from Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) yesterday (December 8).

The case involved an 8-year-old girl, who developed dizziness and syncope when she had a shower using a gas water heater inside the bathroom at home on December 6. She was sent to Princess Margaret Hospital and was later transferred to PYNEH for treatment. She is now in stable condition.

The case has been referred to the relevant department for follow-up.

The CHP said that carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless and tasteless gas which is a by-product from incomplete combustion of any fuel which contains carbon, such as wood, natural gas and gasoline.

Exposure to a low concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to a range of symptoms such as dizziness, headache, tiredness and nausea; whereas exposure to a high concentration of carbon monoxide can lead to impaired vision, disturbed co-ordination, unconsciousness, brain damage or even death.

The CHP reminded members of the public that a gas water heater should be used in a well-ventilated area. They should seek medical attention immediately if suspected of developing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

For safety instructions on purchasing and using a domestic gas water heater, please pay attention to the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD)'s following advice:

- Occupants should arrange the regular safety inspection of gas appliances every 18 months by a registered gas contractor;
- Ensure that the gas water heater has been approved by the EMSD and bears a "GU" mark;
- All installations, replacements or repair work on gas appliances must be carried out by a registered gas installer employed by a registered gas contractor;
- Stop use immediately if the heater shows any abnormality, and contact the appliance dealer to check or repair;
- Turn off the gas main switch promptly under safe conditions if a gas leak is detected and notify the appliance dealer; and

- For more details, please refer to the EMSD's [website](#).