

CHP closely monitors three plague cases in Inner Mongolia

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (August 15) closely monitoring three plague cases in Xilin Gol Meng, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

According to the Health Commission in Sonid Right Banner, Xilin Gol Meng, a female patient was diagnosed with plague on August 7. Her husband and daughter were also subsequently confirmed to have plague on August 12.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Plague is transmitted from an infected animal (mainly rodents) to humans through the bite of its fleas. Plague can also be contracted when cuts or other breaks in the skin come into contact with the body fluids or tissue of infected animals. Consumption of infected animal tissue and inhalation of infected respiratory droplets are also possible modes of transmission."

The spokesman reminded travellers to avoid visiting plague-endemic areas. They should also heighten vigilance on rodents and prevent flea bites. Insect repellents against mosquitoes may equally prevent flea bites and deter blood-sucking insects. Formulations in lotions or sprays should contain DEET, IR3535 or icaridin (also known as picaridin) as active ingredients. The public should refer to the CHP's [tips for using insect repellents](#).

"Travellers returning from affected areas with a sudden onset of fever, shaking chills, body pains or chest discomfort should seek medical advice as soon as possible and reveal their travel history for prompt investigation and management. Plague is a statutorily notifiable disease and doctors should report suspected or confirmed cases to the CHP for investigation and control," the spokesman added.

Travellers should take heed of the health advice below during travel:

- Prevent flea bites by wearing long-sleeved shirts and trousers, and applying insect repellent/insecticide. DEET-containing insect repellent can be applied to exposed skin and clothing, while insecticide containing permethrin can be applied to clothing, not the skin;
- Avoid going to rural areas, camping or hunting;
- Never eat or touch rodents, dead animals and their tissue or contaminated materials;
- Avoid close contact with patients, especially those with cough or chest infection;
- Avoid going to crowded areas;
- Seek medical care immediately in case of a sudden onset of fever, chills, painful lymph nodes, difficulty in breathing with coughing and/or blood-tainted sputum; and
- Consult a doctor immediately after contact or exposure to pneumonic

plague patients or high-risk exposure, such as bites from fleas or direct contact with body fluids or tissue of potentially infected animals, for prompt assessment of the need for preventive medication.

Travellers may visit the CHP's [plague page](#), [Travel Health News](#) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department's [advice on rodent control](#) for details.