

CHP investigates additional imported case of novel coronavirus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (January 31) investigating one additional imported case of novel coronavirus infection. The public is again urged to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene both locally and during travel.

The patient is a 39-year-old man who lives in Block 1, Site 11, Whampoa Garden with underlying illness. He developed myalgia since January 29 and started having fever today. He sought treatment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital today where he was admitted for isolation and management. He is in a stable condition. His respiratory sample was tested positive for novel coronavirus.

The CHP has immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. According to the patient's information, he took High-Speed Rail from Hong Kong to Wuhan (G306) on January 21 and from Changshanan to Hong Kong (G79) on January 23.

Investigations revealed that he neither visited any health care facilities, wet market or seafood market, nor had any exposure to wild animals during the incubation period. His mother, wife, daughter, son and domestic helper are asymptomatic and will be transferred to quarantine centre for quarantine. Investigations are ongoing.

The CHP will report the case to the World Health Organization (WHO), National Health Commission (NHC), Health Commission of Guangdong Province and the health authority of Macao.

So far, 13 confirmed cases are reported in Hong Kong. The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing. The CHP is also closely monitoring a number of overseas cases and conducting related contact tracing.

For the 12th case which was confirmed yesterday, the CHP's investigations revealed that a male taxi driver who had driven the 75-year-old male patient should be regarded as a close contact. The driver who had driven the patient and his wife from the junction at the bus stop outside Hong Shun Building, Cheung Hong Estate in Tsing Yi to Princess Margaret Hospital at around 3.15pm to 3.30pm on January 24 is urged to call the CHP's hotline.

Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for the cases, which operates

from 8am to 9pm daily to answer public enquiries. As at 4pm yesterday, a total of 2053 calls were received.

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 of the latest notifications received from the Mainland and overseas will be updated to the CHP website (www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf) daily at 9am and 6pm to help the public grasp information on the affected countries/areas.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP will continue to maintain its liaison with the NHC, WHO and the relevant health authorities, and closely monitor the situation for risk assessment."

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

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- 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:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province where community transmission of novel coronavirus is occurring;
- 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.

Hong Kong residents returning from the Mainland should take note of the following health advice:

- Members of the public returning to Hong Kong from the Mainland should stay home as far as possible if circumstances allow. Those who need to go out should wear a surgical mask for 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Hong Kong residents who have visited Hubei Province in the past 14 days should wear a surgical mask immediately and approach staff of the DH's Port Health Division upon arrival. They will be sent to a quarantine centre for observation after a health assessment.
- Hong Kong residents who had been to Hubei Province in the past 14 days but have already returned to Hong Kong should wear a surgical mask immediately and contact the DH for arrangement to be sent to a quarantine centre for observation.