

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza B infection and influenza B outbreak at secondary school

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 27) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza B infection and an influenza B outbreak at a secondary school in Wan Chai District, and reminded members of the public who have not yet received seasonal influenza vaccination in the 2018-19 season that they can still receive it for personal protection against seasonal influenza.

The severe paediatric case involves a 12-year-old boy with good past health, who has presented with fever and cough since May 24 and convulsion on May 25. He attended a general practitioner on May 24 for medical attention and was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department of Prince of Wales Hospital on May 25 and was admitted for management on the same day.

His nasopharyngeal aspirate tested positive for influenza B virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza B infection complicated with encephalopathy. He is now in a stable condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had travelled to Shantou during the incubation period. His home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The influenza B outbreak at a secondary school in Wan Chai District affected 19 boys aged 12 to 14 and one female staff member, who developed fever, cough and sore throat since May 18. Among them, 19 sought medical attention and two of them required hospitalisation. All are in a stable condition. The respiratory specimen of one student tested positive for influenza B upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and advised the school to adopt infection control measures against respiratory tract infections. The school has been placed under medical surveillance.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "To prevent outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory infections, it is of prime importance that students with fever, regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should seek medical advice and avoid school till 48 hours after the fever has subsided. Schools should also measure and record students' body temperature properly."

Schools are reminded to follow the [Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases](#) on preventive and control measures as well as

management of outbreaks, which should be reported to the CHP for prompt follow-up.

"Although the winter influenza season has ended, members of the public aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, who have not yet received seasonal influenza vaccination in the 2018-19 season can still receive it for personal protection against seasonal influenza," the spokesman said.

"Meanwhile, the public should continue to adopt strict personal, hand and environmental hygiene practices against respiratory illnesses and other infectious diseases," the spokesman added.

The public may visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#) for more information.