

CHP investigates imported case of measles infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (August 25) investigating an imported case of measles infection and reminded the public that vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles.

The case involves a 20-year-old man with good past health. He developed fever, sore throat, cough and myalgia since August 10 and skin rash on August 13. He visited a private doctor on August 13 and 15. He attended the Accident and Emergency Department of North Lantau Hospital on August 15 and was later transferred to Princess Margaret Hospital for treatment. He is in a stable condition and was discharged yesterday (August 24).

His blood sample tested positive for immunoglobulin M (IgM) antibodies to measles virus upon laboratory testing. The patient reported that he has received measles vaccinations.

According to information provided by the patient, he travelled to Indonesia during the incubation period and did not have contact with measles patients. One of his household contacts, who had travelled with the patient, developed fever and cough yesterday while other household contacts remained asymptomatic. They have been put under medical surveillance.

Upon notification of the case, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. Investigations are ongoing.

"Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. Members of the public who are planning to travel to places with a high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received a measles vaccination during childhood. Those who have not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines, with unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against measles, are urged to consult their doctor for advice on vaccinations at least two weeks before departure," a spokesman for the DH said.

Measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and, less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. A patient can pass the disease to other persons from four days before to four days after the appearance of a skin rash.

The spokesman advised, "The incubation period (the period from infection to appearance of illness) of measles ranges from seven days to 21 days. Symptoms of measles include fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes.

If symptoms arise, members of the public should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should also avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened immunity, pregnant women and children aged below 1. Those suspected to have been infected are advised to seek medical attention as early as possible and reveal relevant contact history of measles to healthcare professionals."

Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of a rash to prevent the spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

â€œFor more information on measles, the public may call the 24-hour health education hotline 2833 0111 or visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). For news of measles outbreaks outside Hong Kong, please visit the website of the DH's [Travel Health Service](#).