

CHP investigates influenza A outbreak at secondary school in Kowloon City

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 4) investigating an influenza A outbreak at a secondary school in Kowloon City, and again reminded the public to maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene against influenza.

The outbreak involves 20 female students aged 12 to 14 who have developed fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose since February 20. All of them sought medical attention. Among them, two students required hospitalisation and one was discharged following treatment. All patients are in a stable condition. The respiratory specimens of four students tested positive for influenza A upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and advised the school to adopt necessary 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.

"The latest surveillance data showed that the local influenza activity has continued to decrease from the peak level in January but remained above the baseline threshold. We urge the community to continue heightening its vigilance against seasonal influenza. As young children are particularly affected in this influenza season, we appeal to parents who have not yet arranged vaccination for their children in this season to do so as soon as possible to strengthen their personal protection," the spokesman said.

Apart from children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are also urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. Medical advice should be sought promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).