

CHP investigates influenza A outbreaks at kindergarten-cum-child care centre and primary school

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 15) investigating two influenza A outbreaks at a kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Fanling and a primary school in Kowloon City, and again reminded the public to maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene against influenza.

The outbreak at the kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Fanling affected 24 students including 10 boys and 14 girls, aged 2 to 6, as well as a female staff member. They have developed fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose since January 4. Twenty-three sought medical attention and six of them required hospitalisation for further management. All patients have been in a stable condition. The respiratory specimens of six students tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing.

For the outbreak at the primary school in Kowloon City, it involves 21 boys, aged 6 to 10, who have developed fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose since January 5. All of them sought medical attention but none required hospitalisation. All patients are in a stable condition. The respiratory specimen of one affected student tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted site visits to both schools and advised the schools to adopt infection control measures against respiratory infections. The schools have been put under medical surveillance.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "To prevent outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory infections, it is of prime importance that children 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.

"Hong Kong has entered the 2018-19 winter influenza season. We anticipate that local seasonal influenza activity will continue to rise in the coming weeks and remain at an elevated level for some time. Members of the public should remain vigilant for protection against influenza," the spokesman said.

"Particularly, children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and

those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are 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. They should promptly seek medical advice 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," the spokesman added.

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](#).