

CHP investigates Mycobacterium abscessus infection case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (December 5) investigating a Mycobacterium abscessus infection case involving a customer who have received injections at a premises under the name of "GEEL MEDICAL" (with Instagram social media account of "geelmedical"). People who have patronised "GEEL MEDICAL" and received relevant injections or suspect they have experienced relevant symptoms, are urged to seek medical attention and contact the CHP as soon as possible.

Since the investigation of the suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster in early November, the CHP has issued multiple press releases and set up a hotline to alert the public and conduct contact tracing of affected persons. The incidents raised the public and doctors' awareness and concerns and hence the case announced today was discovered.

The case involved a 24-year-old female, who has patronised "GEEL MEDICAL" and received injection services claiming to stimulate collagen production on October 9, at a premises located at 13F, Gala Place, 56 Dundas Street, Mong Kok. Initial investigation revealed that the injection was conducted by a registered doctor. She developed a rash and abscess at the injection sites five days after the injection. She returned to the premises a few times for follow-up. Since the condition did not improve, she attended another private doctor on November 20. Clinical sample of the patient obtained by the private doctor confirmed to grow Mycobacterium abscessus yesterday (December 4). The patient is now in stable condition.

Upon receiving relevant information of the case, the CHP conducted on-site investigations at the premises. Investigations include review of the procedures of injection and infection control, professional qualification of the personnel responsible for the injections, if it involved possession of unregistered pharmaceutical products, etc. The incident may involve breaching of infection control procedures. The CHP has collected environmental specimens and relevant apparatus for testing.

The CHP appeals that persons who have patronised "GEEL MEDICAL" (with Instagram social media account of "geelmedical") and received relevant injections after which they presented with relevant symptoms, should seek medical attention and contact the CHP immediately. The CHP has set up an enquiry hotline (2125 2372) which operates from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5.30pm.

Based on information obtained from the preliminary investigation, no epidemiological linkages between this case and the [suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster](#) involving a total of 19 females have been found so far. The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations of the cases.

The DH reminded members of the public that injection procedures should only be performed by a locally registered doctor. Customers should look for his or her full name against the [list of registered doctors](#) of the Medical Council of Hong Kong as well as his or her professional qualifications and relevant experience. The DH also urged the public to observe the health advice below before receiving injections:

- Understand the procedure, potential risks and complications before receiving injections. Consult a doctor for an informed decision;
- Do not receive an injection in case of a history of allergy to the injection, or infection or inflammation on the injection site;
- Request the full name of the doctor in writing if referred by a beauty service provider for the procedure, as well as the professional qualifications and relevant experience; and
- If symptoms develop, such as fever or feeling unwell, seek medical attention immediately.

The public may visit the DH's webpage on the [differentiation between medical procedures and beauty services](#) for more information.