

# CHP investigates outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection at two schools

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (September 18) investigating an outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) at a primary school in Yuen Long and a secondary school in Kwun Tong, and appeals to members of the public and staff of institutions to stay alert and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene.

The outbreak at the primary school in Yuen Long involves 12 male and nine female students aged five to 11. They developed symptoms since September 14, and 11 of them sought medical attention. None of them required hospitalisation. All are in stable condition.

The outbreak at the secondary school in Kwun Tong involves five male and 15 female students aged 11 to 16. They developed symptoms since September 12, and 17 of them sought medical attention. None of them required hospitalisation. All are in stable condition.

The CHP has provided preventive advice against URTI to the primary school and the secondary school, such as advising the schools to arrange cleaning and disinfection, to open windows where appropriate for better ventilation and to separate affected students from other students, etc. The schools have been placed under medical surveillance.

The public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against influenza and other respiratory illnesses, and note the following:

- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination for personal protection;
- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- For high-risk persons (e.g. persons with underlying medical conditions or persons who are immunocompromised), wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub;
- Cover the nose and mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;

- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

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Members of the public, particularly children, the elderly and those with chronic diseases, should consult a doctor promptly if they develop symptoms of respiratory tract infection.