

CHP investigates three additional cases of novel coronavirus infection (2)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm today (February 5), the CHP is investigating three additional cases of novel coronavirus infection, taking to 21 the number of confirmed cases so far in Hong Kong.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to our preliminary epidemiological investigations, some of the confirmed cases are believed to be locally infected. The CHP strongly urged the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community."

The spokesman said, "On the personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes. The public should go out less and reduce social activities, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps); after using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The first two additional cases involves a 56-year-old woman and her 28-year-old daughter who are respectively the wife and daughter of the patient of the 17th confirmed case. The patients, with good past health, live in Yue Hong House, Hong Tin Court in Lam Tin. The 28-year-old female patient developed cough and sore throat on January 30, and then fever on January 31. She was sent to the United Christian Hospital (UCH) and admitted for treatment yesterday. Meanwhile, her mother presented with fever yesterday and was also sent to the UCH for treatment. The patients' respiratory samples were tested positive for novel coronavirus. They were transferred to the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) for further management today. They are both in a stable condition.

The CHP has immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. Preliminary investigations revealed that the 28-year-old female patient had consulted two private doctors between onset and admission to hospital. According to the patients' information, the daughter had no travel history during the incubation period and mainly travelled between her home and her workplace in Tsim Sha Tsui. Her mother also did not have any travel history during the incubation period and mainly

travelled between her home and her workplace in Tuen Mun.

The third case involves a 56-year-old man with good past health who resides in Block 1, Villa Esplanada in Tsing Yi. He developed fever, cough with sputum and sore throat since January 30. He consulted a private doctor on February 2 and then attended the PMH on February 4 where he was admitted for treatment. His respiratory sample was tested positive for novel coronavirus. He is now in a stable condition.

According to the patient's information, he worked in Shenzhen and last visited Shenzhen on January 21. He visited Tokyo in Japan from January 28 to February 1. His wife is symptomatic and was sent to PMH for treatment. Quarantine will be arranged for his other home contacts, namely his parents and domestic helper, who are asymptomatic.

The patient took a flight from Hong Kong to Tokyo on January 28 and returned from Tokyo to Hong Kong on U0651 by Hong Kong Express Airways on February 1. Passengers on board the returning flight concerned and the taxi driver who drove the patient from the Hong Kong International Airport to his home in Villa Esplanada, Tsing Yi at around 1am on February 2 are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province and Health Bureau of Macao.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. The CHP is also closely monitoring and following up on the contact tracing of relevant confirmed cases in the Mainland and overseas. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for public enquiries. The hotline operates from 8am to midnight daily. As at 4pm today, a total of 4 744 calls were received.

A dedicated webpage (www.gov.hk/ncv) has been set up by the CHP. Information including the latest local situation, list of buildings and list of flights/trains/ships relevant to the confirmed cases, countries/areas with reported cases as well as health advice and a "Novel Coronavirus Infection Local Situation Interactive Map Dashboard" are available on the webpage to help the public grasp the latest updates.

Hong Kong residents returning from the Mainland should take note of the following health advice:

- Members of the public returning to Hong Kong from the Mainland should stay home as far as possible if circumstances allow. Those who need to go out should wear a surgical mask for 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Hong Kong residents who have visited Hubei Province in the past 14 days

should wear a surgical mask immediately and approach staff of the DH's Port Health Division upon arrival. They will be quarantined for observation after a health assessment.

- Hong Kong residents who had been to Hubei Province in the past 14 days but have already returned to Hong Kong should wear a surgical mask immediately and call the CHP hotline for arrangement to be quarantined for observation.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province where community transmission of novel coronavirus is occurring;
- Avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible community transmission of novel coronavirus infection. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;

- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.