

CHP investigates two additional cases of novel coronavirus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (January 31) investigating two additional cases of novel coronavirus infection. The public is again urged to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene both locally and during travel.

The first case involves a 37-year-old woman residing in the Coronation in Yau Ma Tei who is the daughter of the patients of the 9th and 10th case. She developed cough on January 28 and was sent to Queen Elizabeth Hospital yesterday (January 30) where she was admitted for isolation and management. She is in stable condition. The patient's respiratory sample was tested positive for novel coronavirus.

The CHP has immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. According to the information the patient provided, she stayed at W Hong Kong with her parents from January 22 to 28 and then visited The Ritz-Carlton Hong Kong and Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong along with her parents. She returned home after accompanying her parents to Queen Mary Hospital on January 28. Preliminary investigations revealed that she neither visited any wet market or seafood market, nor had any exposure to wild animals or poultry during the incubation period.

The second case involves a 75-year-old man residing in Hong Mei House, Cheung Hong Estate in Tsing Yi. He developed cough and shortness of breath on January 22. He sought treatment at Princess Margaret Hospital on January 24 and was admitted for management. His respiratory sample was tested positive for novel coronavirus yesterday under enhanced laboratory surveillance. He is now in a stable condition and being treated in isolation at Princess Margaret Hospital.

According to the patient's information, he visited Shunde in Guangdong Province from December 30 last year to January 7 this year and sought treatment at a clinic there. He took day trips to Macao from January 10 to 14. His wife, daughter and son are asymptomatic and will be transferred to Lady MacLehose Holiday Village for quarantine. The CHP is following up on relevant contact tracing. Investigations are ongoing.

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

So far, 12 confirmed cases are reported in Hong Kong. The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing. The CHP is also closely monitoring a number of overseas cases and conducting related contact tracing.

The CHP today received verification of a case confirmed on January 26 by the health authority of Taiwan and noted that the patient took the flight CZ3097 by China Southern Airlines from Guangzhou to Taipei on January 25. A Hong Kong resident on the same flight is regarded as a close contact of the confirmed case.

Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. The Lady MacLehose Holiday Village under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has been converted as quarantine centre and close contacts would be transferred to the village for quarantine. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for the cases, which operates from 8am to 9pm daily to answer public enquiries. As at 4pm yesterday, a total of 1 663 calls were received.

A dedicated webpage (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html) has been set up by the CHP to provide relevant information and health advice on Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent. Information of the latest notifications received from the Mainland and overseas will be updated to the CHP website (www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf) daily at 9am and 6pm to help the public grasp information on the affected countries/areas.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP will continue to maintain its liaison with the National Health Commission, the World Health Organization and the relevant health authorities, and closely monitor the situation for risk assessment."

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;
- 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. If it is unavoidable to travel to such places, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong, and self-isolate for 14 days as far as possible. For those returning from other parts of the Mainland, they are advised to stay home for 14 days upon their return as far as possible. Those who need to go out should wear a surgical mask;

- 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.