

CHP investigates two additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, July 30, the CHP was investigating two additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 11 985 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 11 984 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Both of the newly reported cases are imported cases.

A total of 27 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (July 16 to 29) and all of them are imported cases.

In view of the fact that many recent imported cases have joined non-essential travel after vaccination, the spokesman of the CHP stressed, "The global situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and there is a continuous increase in the number of cases involving mutant strains that carry higher transmissibility, and there are also reports of breakthrough infections in some vaccinated individuals. The CHP strongly urged members of the public to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong, in particular to specified places with extremely high risk and very high risk under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H).

"If travel is unavoidable, the CHP highly recommended the public to be fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccines before their departure. They should continue to wear a surgical mask and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times. Parents are also urged to avoid taking unvaccinated children travelling," the spokesman reminded.

Meanwhile, the CHP is following up two newly notified overseas confirmed cases. The first case involves a 45-year-old male patient. He departed Hong Kong on July 7 to Japan via flight JL0026. He developed symptoms on July 19 and his specimen collected the next day (July 20) tested positive for COVID-19, while those collected on July 2, 3, and 5 in Hong Kong and on July 7 in Japan tested negative. The second case involves a 48-year-old male patient, who departed Hong Kong on July 21 to London via flight CX251. His specimen collected on July 23 tested positive for COVID-19 and he remains asymptomatic. The CHP is following up on the cases with the Japan and United Kingdom health authorities, and the epidemiological investigations of the cases are ongoing. As a prudent measure, the premises (B P International, 8 Austin Road, Tsim Sha Tsui and Unit 14, 6/F, Elite Industrial Centre, 883 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Lai Chi Kok) where the 45-year-old male patient had resided and worked during the incubation period were put under a compulsory testing notice (CTN) last night, while those where the 48-year-old male patient had resided (Tower 5, Phase 3 – The Graces, Providence Bay, Tai Po, and Gateway Hotel, 13 Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui) and worked (Room 3002, 30/F, Citicorp Centre, 18 Whitfield Road, Causeway Bay) during the incubation

period will be put under a CTN today. Any person who had been present at the specified premises for more than two hours during the specified period has to undergo compulsory testing on or before the specified dates.

Separately, according to the testing and quarantine arrangements for local COVID-19 cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on days 3, 7, 12 and 19 following the announcement of the relevant confirmed cases by the DH. They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day. Relevant deadlines of compulsory testing for respective specified premises are listed on the Government's website

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf

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Specified persons in relation to the following specified premises are also reminded to undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the CTN tomorrow (July 31):

- Leon Court, 12-14 Wong Nai Chung Gap Road, Wan Chai; and
- Centre Point, 72 Staunton Street, Central.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).

The CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

"The CHP also strongly urges 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. On a 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. Moreover, vaccination may help keep people from getting seriously ill even if they do get COVID-19, and, generally speaking, vaccines can also reduce the chance of transmission by those who have been vaccinated. People vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine can also generate herd immunity. Members of the public are urged to get vaccinated as soon as possible and book their vaccination appointments at the website (booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/index.jsp).

"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 spokesman said.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, 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 performing 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 doorknobs, 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 litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) 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.