

CHP investigates two outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (November 2) investigating two outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection (URTI), and appeals to members of the public and staff of institutions to stay alert and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene.

Details of the outbreaks are listed in the table below:

| Type of school (District) | Number of people affected and details of medical attention | Earliest onset date | Symptoms | Date of issuing compulsory testing notice |
|---|--|---------------------|--|---|
| Case 1: Kindergarten/nursery (Sham Shui Po) | Nine boys and 12 girls (aged 2 to 5); 19 sought medical attention; all are in stable condition and none required hospitalisation | September 24 | Fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose | September 27 |
| Case 2: Kindergarten (Sha Tin) | 10 boys and 11 girls (aged 3 to 5); 15 sought medical attention; all are in stable condition and one required hospitalisation | October 24 | Fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose | October 27 |

Officers of the CHP have advised the institutions to adopt necessary infection control measures against respiratory infections. They have been put under medical surveillance. In addition, since the symptoms of URTI are similar to those of COVID-19, for prudence's sake, the above institutions were covered in the compulsory testing notices earlier to exclude the possibility of COVID-19 infection. They had suspended teaching activities for at least five days as required for cleaning and executing the compulsory testing notices.

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;
- 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.

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