

CHP investigates two outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (October 24) investigating two outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection (URI) at a primary school in Kwai Chung and a residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) in Kowloon City, and appealed 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 involved 10 boys aged 10 girls aged 6 to 10 who have developed URI symptoms including fever, cough, runny nose and sore throat since September 11. All of them sought medical attention. Among them, four required hospitalisation and were discharged upon treatment. All patients are now in stable condition.

The respiratory specimens of five affected students tested positive for adenovirus upon laboratory testing.

The outbreak at the RCHE affected 10 male and 12 female residents aged 61 to 99, who have developed URI symptoms including fever, cough and runny nose since October 4. All of them sought medical attention. Among them, eight required hospitalisation and four were discharged following treatment. One patient passed away while other patients are now in a stable condition.

The respiratory specimens of 19 affected residents tested positive for Parainfluenza Virus Type 3 upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted site visits and advised the school and the RCHE to adopt necessary infection control measures against respiratory tract infections. Both premises have been placed under medical surveillance.

The public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against influenza and other respiratory illnesses:

- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination for personal protection;
- 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 when sneezing or coughing, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin;
- Put on a surgical mask when respiratory symptoms develop;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Avoid going to crowded or poorly ventilated public places; high-risk individuals may consider putting on surgical masks when staying in such

places; 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.