

Government adjusts service arrangements of deep throat saliva specimen collection

The Government announced today (October 1) that since deep throat saliva specimen is no longer accepted for compulsory or regular testing, adjustments will be made to the service arrangements of deep throat saliva specimen collection starting October 4 (Monday) after reviewing the usage and public demand for the testing services. Details are as follows:

- The specimen collection points located at Shaukeiwan Chest Clinic, Central Government Offices, East Kowloon Chest Clinic on Hammer Hill Road, Tai Wan Shan Swimming Pool in Hung Hom, Lei Cheng Uk Swimming Pool in Sham Shui Po, Tai Po Waterfront Park and Tai Po Chest Clinic will cease operation starting October 4 (Monday);
- The 76 existing specimen collection points across the territory will continue operation to enable the public to undergo voluntary testing. These 76 specimen collection points are 47 designated general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority (HA), 10 designated clinics of the Department of Health and 19 specimen collection points at Government premises. These specimen collection points will remain open from 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 3pm on Mondays to Fridays, and from 9am to 11am on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays (some GOPCs of the HA do not provide collection service on Sundays and public holidays).

A Government spokesman said, "Taking into consideration that some members of the public still undergo testing on a voluntary basis and this can facilitate community surveillance and help achieve the objectives of 'early identification, early isolation and early treatment', the Government will continue to provide deep throat saliva specimen collection packs free-of-charge to enable individuals who perceive themselves as having a higher risk of exposure or experience mild discomfort to undergo free testing. However, the supply of the specimen collection packs will be adjusted at appropriate junctures."

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The public should note that apart from the designated GOPCs of the HA, other specimen collection points do not distribute deep throat saliva specimen collection packs. If they wish to obtain specimen collection packs, they can visit the 47 designated GOPCs of the HA, all 121 post offices across the territory or vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations. Specimen collection packs can be obtained for free (one pack only per person) on a first-come-first-served basis while stocks last. For the locations of the aforementioned distribution/collection points and distribution/collection hours, please browse the following website:

www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html.

The spokesman reminded that persons subject to compulsory testing (e.g.

who had been present at a premises visited by a confirmed case) or trades subject to regular testing, arrivals in Hong Kong who need to undergo compulsory testing after completing compulsory quarantine or isolation in a designated quarantine hotel or at home and arrivals in Hong Kong under the Return2hk or Come2hk Schemes must undergo testing with professional swab sampling at a community testing centre (www.communitytest.gov.hk), a mobile specimen collection station (only for the applicable service scope) or a recognised local medical testing institution to comply with the compulsory testing requirement. Young children may continue to undergo the test using stool specimen. Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements (including how to obtain stool specimen collection packs) may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901.

The spokesman urged all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or contacted confirmed cases) to undergo testing promptly for effective and early identification of infected persons.