

Suspected MERS cases reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 27) reported two suspected cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit. The cases are detailed below:

Sex	Female	Male
Age	9	30
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Camel ride	Nil
Hospital	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	United Christian Hospital
Condition	Stable	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Pending	Pending

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed fever or lower respiratory symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the CHP and its Travel Health Service, MERS statistics in affected areas, the CHP's Facebook Page and YouTube Channel, and the World Health Organization's latest news for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's health advice on MERS.