

Update on measles case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (March 24) reported the latest developments in its investigations into a measles case and reminded the public again that vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles.

The case concerned was announced yesterday which involved a 41-year-old man working for an airline. A CHP spokesman said that, upon notification of the case, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. Initial investigations revealed that no contact has shown measles-related symptoms so far. No high risks contacts such as immunocompromised persons, young children aged below one and pregnant women are identified among the contacts.

The places the man visited during the communicable period are listed below:

Date	Place	End of medical surveillance for contacts
March 8	CX939 from Hong Kong to Manila	March 29
March 9	CX932 from Manila to Hong Kong	March 30
March 13	CX759 from Hong Kong to Singapore	April 3
March 13	CX712 from Singapore to Bangkok	April 3
March 14	CX616 from Bangkok to Hong Kong	April 4
March 14	CX653 from Hong Kong to Bangkok	April 4
March 15	CX654 from Bangkok to Hong Kong	April 5
March 15	CX709 from Hong Kong to Bangkok	April 5
March 16	CX702 from Bangkok to Hong Kong	April 6

"Our epidemiological investigations of the outbreak announced earlier on are continuing. To prevent possible spread of infection at the airport, a vaccination station has been set up at the airport since yesterday to provide measles vaccination to people non-immune to measles working there if necessary," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"The CHP has continued the vaccination services for staff members concerned today, which was provided at Port Health Office Health Post (South Arrival Apron Passenger Vehicle Lounge, Level 4, Terminal 1) from 2 to 5pm today. Starting tomorrow till Friday (March 25-29), the services will be strengthened that the staff members concerned may receive vaccination from 10am to 1pm and 2 to 5pm at the above Port Health Office Health Post and at an additional location at Multi-function Room, HKIA Tower, Level 5, Terminal 2," the spokesman added.

"This mop-up measles vaccination exercise aims to protect those non-immune to measles. For those who was born before 1967 in Hong Kong, it is expected that they have contracted measles in the past and thus have antibodies against measles. Separately, those who have received two doses of measles-containing vaccine will also be protected against measles," the spokesman explained.

The spokesman said that as of noon today, 163 persons received measles vaccination at the vaccination station and around 200 persons attended health talk these days. A hotline (2125 1122) is set up for public enquiries and operates from 9am to 5.45pm daily. As of 5pm today, the hotline received 195 enquiries.

In addition, the CHP is also investigating a case of measles infection, involving a 27-year-old man with good past health. He developed fever on March 19 and rash on the next day. He sought medical advice at the Accident and Emergency Department of Queen Elizabeth Hospital on March 21 and was admitted for management. His throat swab specimen tested positive for measles virus upon laboratory testing. He is in a stable condition.

The patient reported to have received measles vaccination and have no contact with measles patients during the incubation period. He had no travel history during the communicable period but had travelled to Japan during the incubation period. His home contact has remained asymptomatic so far and has been put under medical surveillance.

Relevant epidemiological investigations are ongoing.

The spokesman explained that measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets spread or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and, less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. A patient can pass the disease to other persons from four days before to four days after the appearance of skin rash.

The spokesman reminded, "The incubation period of measles ranges from seven days to up to 21 days. Contacts who are not immune to measles may develop relevant symptoms, such as fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes, in the incubation period. They should observe if they develop such symptoms in the period. If symptoms arise, they should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened

immunity, pregnant women and children aged below 1. They should also report their symptoms and prior travel history to the healthcare workers so that appropriate infection control measures can be implemented at the healthcare facilities to prevent any potential spread."

In Hong Kong, children are given the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine at 1 year old, followed by a second dose at Primary One under the Hong Kong Childhood Immunisation Programme. The coverage of MMR vaccination in Hong Kong is over 95 per cent at Primary One.

"Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. Members of the public who are planning to travel to places with high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received measles vaccination during childhood. The history of measles vaccination in Hong Kong is available in the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). Those who have not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines, with unknown vaccination history or with unknown immunity against measles are urged to consult their doctor for advice on vaccination at least two weeks before departure," the spokesman said.

Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of rash to prevent spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

For more information on measles, please visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). For outbreak news of measles outside Hong Kong or the latest travel health advice, please visit the website of DH's [Travel Health Service](#).