

## Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (August 2) reported a suspected case 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 case is detailed below:

Sex	Female
Age	38
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Princess Margaret Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Negative

"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.

"As the Hajj pilgrimage will begin soon, pilgrims visiting Mecca in Saudi Arabia should be vigilant against MERS. Those with pre-existing medical conditions, such as diabetes, chronic lung disease, chronic renal disease and immunodeficiency, are more likely to develop severe infections if they are exposed to MERS-CoV. Pilgrims should hence consult healthcare providers before travel to review the risk and assess whether pilgrimage is advisable. Pilgrims visiting Mecca may refer to the DH's [advice](#). If pilgrims feel unwell during the two weeks after returning to Hong Kong, they should wear a surgical mask and seek medical attention immediately and inform a doctor of their recent travel history," the spokesman added.

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](#).

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## Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (August 2) released the latest grading of water quality for 38 gazetted beaches that are open for swimming and one non-gazetted beach (i.e. Discovery Bay\*).

Sixteen beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), 19 as Fair (Grade 2), three as Poor (Grade 3) and one as Very Poor (Grade 4).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach	Lo So Shing Beach
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Repulse Bay Beach
Clear Water Bay Second Beach	St Stephen's Beach
Discovery Bay	Stanley Main Beach
Hap Mun Bay Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach	Trio Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	Upper Cheung Sha Beach

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach	Lido Beach
Butterfly Beach	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Cafeteria New Beach	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach
Cafeteria Old Beach	Middle Bay Beach
Casam Beach	Pui O Beach
Castle Peak Beach	Shek O Beach
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Silverstrand Beach

Deep Water Bay Beach  
Golden Beach  
Kadoorie Beach

South Bay Beach  
Ting Kau Beach

Grade 3 beaches are:

Approach Beach  
Big Wave Bay Beach

Hoi Mei Wan Beach

Grade 4 beach is:  
Silver Mine Bay Beach

\* Discovery Bay is a non-gazetted beach without lifeguard service.

Compared with the grading released last week, Kwun Yam Beach has been upgraded from Grade 2 to Grade 1 and Cafeteria Old Beach, Casam Beach and Ting Kau Beach from Grade 3 to Grade 2. Silver Mine Bay Beach has been changed from Grade 2 to Grade 4.

"The deterioration of water quality in Silver Mine Bay Beach was due to the recent unsteady weather, while the changes in other beaches are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a storm or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the department's website on Beach Water Quality ([www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach)) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.

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# Update on dengue fever and chikungunya fever

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (August 2) reported the latest number of cases of dengue fever (DF) and chikungunya fever (CF), and strongly urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

## A. Dengue fever

From July 26 to August 1, the CHP recorded four imported DF cases. The patients had been to Cambodia (two cases), Indonesia (one case) and Thailand (one case) during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (August 1), 99 cases had been recorded this year, as compared with 53 cases recorded in the same period last year. All the cases recorded in 2019 were imported, mainly from Thailand (18), Indonesia (17) and Malaysia (17).

The CHP has been closely monitoring the latest DF situation in neighbouring and overseas areas. DF is endemic in many tropical and subtropical areas of the world. According to the World Health Organization, some Asian countries are experiencing unusually high numbers of DF cases for this time of year. Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas this year has been uploaded to the CHP's website ([www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df\\_imported\\_cases\\_and\\_overseas\\_figures\\_eng.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf)).

â€œApart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor," a spokesman for the CHP said.

## B. Chikungunya fever

â€œFrom July 26 to August 1, the CHP recorded one CF case. The patient had lived in Thailand during the incubation period. As of yesterday (August 1), six confirmed CF cases had been recorded this year, all of which were imported cases from Thailand.

CF is a mosquito-borne disease caused by the chikungunya virus. It is clinically characterised by fever frequently accompanied by joint pain. Other common signs and symptoms include muscle pain, headache, nausea, fatigue and a rash. Joint pain is often very debilitating, but usually lasts for a few days or may be prolonged for weeks. Most patients recover fully, but in some cases joint pain may persist for several months, or even years.

Chikungunya virus is transmitted to humans by mosquito bites. Although the vector *Aedes aegypti* is not found in Hong Kong, another vector, *Aedes albopictus*, is widely distributed locally. These mosquitoes can be found biting throughout daylight hours, though there may be peaks of activity in the early morning and late afternoon.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children\*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

\* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the [CF page](#) of the CHP, the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

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## Provisional statistics of restaurant receipts and purchases for second quarter of 2019

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest provisional figures on restaurant receipts and purchases today (August 2).

The value of total receipts of the restaurants sector in the second quarter of 2019, provisionally estimated at \$28.7 billion, decreased by 0.4% over a year earlier. Over the same period, the provisional estimate of the value of total purchases by restaurants increased by 0.8% to \$9.3 billion.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total restaurant receipts decreased by 2.6% in the second quarter of 2019 compared with a year earlier.

Analysed by type of restaurant and comparing the second quarter of 2019 with the second quarter of 2018, total receipts of Chinese restaurants decreased by 2.1% in value and 4.4% in volume. Total receipts of non-Chinese restaurants decreased by 1.6% in value and 3.7% in volume. Total receipts of fast food shops increased by 3.2% in value and 1.8% in volume. Total receipts of bars decreased by 4.4% in value and 5.4% in volume. As for miscellaneous eating and drinking places, total receipts increased by 5.3% in value and 1.5% in volume.

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of total restaurant receipts decreased by 4.6% in value and 4.4% in volume in the second quarter of 2019 compared with the preceding quarter.

Comparing the first half of 2019 with the same period in 2018, total restaurant receipts increased by 1.4% in value but decreased by 0.9% in volume.

To facilitate further understanding of the short-term business performance of the restaurants sector, statistics in respect of the restaurant receipts and purchases in individual months of the reference quarter are also compiled.

Analysed by month, it was provisionally estimated that the value of total receipts of the restaurants sector decreased by 0.2%, 0.5% and 0.6% respectively in April, May and June 2019, compared with the corresponding months a year earlier.

After discounting the effect of price changes, it was provisionally estimated that the volume of total restaurant receipts decreased by 2.4%, 2.7% and 2.8% respectively in April, May and June 2019, compared with the

corresponding months a year earlier.

#### Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures of restaurant receipts by type of restaurant and total purchases by the restaurants sector for the first quarter of 2019 as well as the provisional figures for the second quarter of 2019.

Table 2 and Table 3 present the revised value and volume indices respectively of restaurant receipts by type of restaurant for the first quarter of 2019 and the provisional indices for the second quarter of 2019.

Table 4 presents the year-on-year rate of change in total restaurant receipts in value and volume terms based on the original quarterly series, as well as the quarter-to-quarter rate of change based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The revised figures on restaurant receipts and purchases for the second quarter of 2019 (with breakdown by month) will be released through the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/bbs.jsp](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/bbs.jsp)) and relevant publications of the Department from September 20, 2019.

The classification of restaurants follows the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC) Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into different industry classes.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Quarterly Survey of Restaurant Receipts and Purchases". Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=B1080002](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=B1080002)).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7401; email: [qsr@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:qsr@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## **Red flag hoisted at Silver Mine Bay Beach**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (August 2)

that the Environmental Protection Department has classified the water quality at Silver Mine Bay Beach in Islands District as Grade 4, which means the beach is not suitable for swimming. The red flag has been hoisted. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach until further notice.