

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric enterovirus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 30) investigating a case of severe paediatric enterovirus (EV) infection, and again urged the public and institutions to maintain strict hand, personal and environmental hygiene.

The case involves a one-month-old baby boy with good past health, who has presented with fever since March 28. He was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department of Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital on the same day and was admitted for management. The patient has been in a stable condition.

His cerebrospinal fluid specimen tested positive for EV upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis were meningitis and encephalitis.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no recent travel history. His elder sister had developed fever recently. She did not seek medical attention and had recovered. Other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. Investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP said that as EV infection is transmitted by direct contact with nose and throat discharges, the public should be vigilant and observe the following preventive measures:

- Wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet and changing diapers;
- Cover the mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing;
- Maintain good ventilation; and
- Thoroughly clean toys or appliances which are contaminated by nasal or oral secretions.

Children suffering from EV infection should stay at home and avoid contact with other children until they have recovered.

The public may visit the CHP's page on [hand, foot and mouth disease and EV71 infection](#) for more information.

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Update on measles cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (March 30) investigating an additional case of measles infection, who is a worker at Cathay City.

â€‹ The case involving a 26-year-old woman with good past health, who developed fever on March 25 and rash on March 28. She sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department at Princess Margaret Hospital on the same day and was admitted for treatment. A laboratory test of her respiratory specimen was positive for measles virus. She is in a stable condition. She reported that she had had measles vaccination and had no

travel history during the incubation period or communicable period.

According to the patient, she did not have contact with measles patients but frequently visited Hong Kong International Airport for lunch during the incubation period. Her father had once developed fever and cough and had sought medical attention. He has been in a stable condition and has recovered. Her other home contact has remained asymptomatic so far. They have been put under medical surveillance.

â€œ 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. The public places the patient visited during the communicable period are listed in the appendix.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "In view of the measles outbreak at the airport, the CHP yesterday launched a pilot programme there to conduct serology tests for people working at the airport on a voluntary basis, aiming to better grasp the overall immunity against measles among airport staff so that the measles control strategy can be fine-tuned.

"The pilot programme completed its target of recruiting 100 people who work at the airport for blood tests yesterday, hence the blood test station set up by the CHP for the purpose will not be opened today and tomorrow. Airport staff participating in the pilot programme will be individually informed of the result by phone. Those who have tested positive for measles antibodies (IgG) are regarded as immune to measles and there will be no need for further vaccination."

After consideration of the pilot serology test results, the CHP will announce the subsequent arrangements for the measles vaccination exercise at the airport in due course.

â€œ The measles vaccination exercise at the airport aims to protect those working at the airport who are non-immune to measles. The target group refers to people working at the airport who are:

- (1) Non-locally born or born in Hong Kong from 1967 to 1984; and
- (2) Have not received two doses of measles vaccination; and
- (3) Have not been infected with measles before; and in particular
- (4) Those who need to take care of infants under one year old or pregnant women

The vaccination stations at the airport will remain open until April 4. Due to restrictions in the cold chain logistics arrangement for vaccine delivery, the service hours for Sunday will be adjusted. Details of the arrangement are as follows:

Venue:	Port Health Office Health Post (South Arrival Apron Passenger Vehicle Lounge, Level 4, Terminal 1)
	Multi-function Room, HKIA Tower (Level 5, Terminal 2)
Hours:	March 31: 9am to 1pm 2pm to 5pm
	April 1 to 4: 10am to 1pm 2pm to 5pm 6pm to 9pm

A total of 700 persons received measles vaccinations at the vaccination stations as at 5pm today, bringing the cumulative number of vaccinations given to 6 646. A hotline (2125 1122) is set up for public enquiries and operates from 9am to 5.45pm daily. As of 5pm today, the hotline had received a cumulative total of 2 268 enquiries.

Information on the confirmed measles cases in 2019 with their case summary has been uploaded onto the [CHP website](#).

The spokesman explained, "Measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets 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 added, "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 one. They should also report their symptoms and prior travel history to healthcare workers so that appropriate infection control measures can be implemented at healthcare facilities to prevent any potential spread.

"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, who do not know their vaccination history or who have 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 news of measles outbreaks outside Hong Kong or the latest travel health advice, please visit the website of DH's [Travel Health Service](#).

S for S speaks on proposed amendments to Fugitive Offenders Ordinance and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, at a media session after attending a radio programme today (March 30):

Reporter: Secretary, I have two questions. First question regarding AmCham's (American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong) criticism that they have serious concerns. Do you think these concerns are reasonable? Do they really need to worry? Second question is about you said that in future in the Mainland, only high level departments can request an extradition. Can that really ensure that the process is fair and there would be a fair trial? Can that really soothe concerns away?

Secretary for Security: I will continue to explain what the Bill intends to do to the business sector including business sectors from overseas. It is the international commitment to fight organised crime. In fact, in the United Nation resolution, signatory countries have agreed that this is for the overall good of its country and the world. So, in order to have an environment, which is free of organised crime, I can only think that it will

benefit business environment, and I will strongly believe that overseas businessmen, who operate or run a business in Hong Kong or in the Mainland, are law-complying businessmen. So, to create an environment, which will be free of organised crime, in fact, should be productive to business. That's the first thing. The second thing I have been noting is that, a lot of countries have been asking Mainland China to open up to more businesses from overseas to go into to do business, and I think these businessmen, who will of course, go into Mainland China so as to run their business in accordance with the law. So, they want to do more business in the Mainland, and they will be doing business in accordance with the law. We, Hong Kong, try to deal with this matter, so that we will help fight organised crime. So, I think it should benefit (the business sector), but of course I will continue to explain to them. If the accusation is that somebody may unwittingly become a political offender, then I have said repeatedly that the law at present, under our Fugitive Offenders Ordinance, has clearly stated that this will not be possible. There are at least three clearly written provisions to say that political offences, no matter how they are described, they will not be surrenderable. There is a provision to say that no matter how you purport that offence to be, if it relates to political opinion, religion, nationality or ethnicity, then it will not be surrenderable. There is also a third provision, which says that, if a person will be prejudiced as he is tried, or in any way mistreated, because of his political opinion, nationality, religion or ethnicity, then he will not be surrendered. So, for anybody who thinks that he may then become a political prisoner, I think the law has sufficiently protected him. What is your second question?

Reporter: About in future in the Mainland, high level departments request an extradition. Can that be really ensured a fair trial?

Secretary for Security: I really wish the society doesn't confuse a long-term arrangement with a case-by-case arrangement. The long-term arrangement will not be affected in anyway whatsoever under the present Fugitive Offenders Ordinance. I think you have seen the Bill, anything relates to a long-term agreement will be totally preserved. Our discussion with the Mainland for a long-term arrangement is still going on, so don't confuse that. I am proposing a system, which will allow Hong Kong to deal with a jurisdiction's request on a case-by-case basis when that jurisdiction does not have a long-term agreement with Hong Kong. That's what I am proposing, and there will be a universal standard that I am going to apply, with mutual respect to any such requests. That standard conforms to all the safeguards and the legal procedures of the present law. So, I am not designing this system mainly for the Mainland. But since a lot of people have asked this question, and in fact in some of the communications I have with representatives, they have sent me written request about this point. So I have communicated with my counterparts in the Mainland, their initial response is they will be centralising requests, so that it will be handled at a high level. The usual way to handle a surrender between states will be likely between either foreign offices or the responsible departments of justice. Under the "one country, two systems", the one-country (two-system) operation, then of course, is a different system that may have to apply. So the initial response that was given to me has been that, "yes", they will centralise to ensure that the cases that are dealt

with, are cases that are worth the consideration of both places. One other thing which people may have not picked up is, for any surrender under this case-by-case arrangement, it will be done fully under the spotlight. I am sure you will be reporting it almost completely, so it will be done under the sunshine. So, in Hong Kong it will be in the open court. You will be seeing the whole process how the subject person's rights will be fully protected, how the case will be heard, how the government side will argue and the other side will also argue on the case, how a habeas corpus can be applied for and how appeals and juridical review will be done. So, under that spotlight, I am sure everybody will begin to understand more of how the law is going to apply. And also under that spotlight, you will see how strictly all these provisions and safeguards will be enforced. Likewise, when the subject person is handed over, I think the media in that jurisdiction will also put the whole case under the spotlight. So I think this system gives not just safeguards, which is written in the law, but also safeguards by the fourth power. Thank you very much.

Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (March 30) 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	Male
Age	30
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Tuen Mun 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.

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](#).