

# CHP investigates case of invasive meningococcal infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 12) investigating a case of invasive meningococcal infection, a communicable disease transmitted by direct contact with droplets from carriers or infected persons.

The case involves a 29-days-old baby girl, with good past health, who has presented with fever and rash since May 10. She was admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit of Tuen Mun Hospital for treatment on the same day and is now in stable condition.

Her blood and cerebrospinal fluid sample were tested positive for *Neisseria meningitidis* upon laboratory testing. Her clinical diagnosis were meningitis and meningococcaemia.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no recent travel history. Her home contacts have remained asymptomatic. The CHP's investigation is continuing.

"Meningococcal infection is caused by a bacterium known as meningococcus. It is mainly transmitted by direct contact through respiratory secretions, including droplets from the nose and throat, from infected persons. The incubation period varies from two to 10 days, and is commonly three or four days," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The clinical picture may vary. Severe illness may result when the bacteria invade the bloodstream (meningococcaemia) or the membranes that envelop the brain and spinal cord (meningococcal meningitis).

Meningococcaemia is characterised by sudden onset of fever, intense headache, purpura, shock and even death in severe cases. Meningococcal meningitis is characterised by high fever, severe headache and stiff neck followed by drowsiness, vomiting, fear of bright light, or a rash. It can cause brain damage or even death. The brain damage may lead to intellectual impairment, mental retardation, hearing loss and electrolyte imbalance. Invasive meningococcal infections can be complicated by arthritis, inflammation of the heart muscle, inflammation of the posterior chamber of the eye or chest infection.

Meningococcal infection is a serious illness. Patients should be treated promptly with antibiotics.

To prevent meningococcal infection, members of the public are advised to take heed of the following measures:

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly, especially when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, e.g. after sneezing, and clean hands

with alcohol-based handrub when they are not visibly soiled;

- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing, hold the spit with tissue, dispose of nasal and mouth discharge in a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands immediately;
- Avoid crowded places;
- Avoid close contact with patients who have fever or severe headache;
- Travellers to high-risk areas may consult doctors for meningococcal vaccination; and
- Travellers returning from high-risk areas should seek medical advice if they become ill and should discuss their recent travel history with their doctor.

The public may visit the CHP's [website](#) for more information on meningococcal infection.

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## Case of invasive Haemophilus influenzae type b infection under CHP investigation

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 12) investigating a case of invasive Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) infection, and hence urged the public to maintain good personal hygiene, especially hand hygiene.

The patient is a one-year-old boy with good past health. He has presented with fever, shortness of breath and wheezing since May 8 and was admitted to Tuen Mun Hospital for treatment on May 10. The patient is now in stable condition.

His blood culture was tested positive for Hib upon laboratory testing. His clinical diagnoses was sepsis.

The patient had no recent travel history and his home contacts remain asymptomatic. Investigations are ongoing.

Invasive Hib infection has been a statutory notifiable infectious disease since July 2008. Invasive Hib infection commonly presents clinically as infection of membranes covering the brain (meningitis), often accompanied by bacteria entering the bloodstream. It may also affect other parts of the body such as the lungs, the upper part of the throat (epiglottitis), joints and bones. Prompt antibiotic treatment is necessary.

"Hib infection can be spread by contact with the nose or throat secretions of a patient. If persistent fever, unusual changes in behaviour or other deteriorating conditions develop, or if in doubt, seek medical

attention immediately," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Members of the public are advised to observe personal hygiene and take heed of the preventive measures below:

- Maintain hand hygiene and clean hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are soiled with respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing or coughing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal discharge and sputum properly;
- Do not share eating and drinking utensils, and wash them thoroughly after use;
- Avoid going to crowded places if not feeling well; and
- An effective vaccine against Hib is available. For personal protection, seek advice from a health-care professional.

The public may visit the CHP's invasive Hib [page](#) for more information.

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## Mui Wo Swimming Pool temporarily closed

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 12) that Mui Wo Swimming Pool in Islands District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small amount of vomit in the pool.

It will be reopened at 6.15 pm today.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.

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## Appeal for information on missing man in Wan Chai (with photo)

Police today (May 12) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Wan Chai.

Chiu Kwok-wai, David, aged 48, went missing after he was last seen on Hennessy Road yesterday (May 11) afternoon. His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.65 metres tall, 65 kilograms in weight and of medium build. He has a pointed face with yellow complexion and straight black hair. He was last seen wearing a dark coloured T-shirt, light brown trousers and carrying a black rucksack.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Hong Kong Island on 3660 6490 or 9886 0034, or email to [rmpu-hki@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-hki@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.



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## CEDD takes part in geohazard symposium in Chengdu (with photos)

The Director of Civil Engineering and Development, Mr Lam Sai-hung, and the Head of the Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department, Mr Pun Wai-keung, today (May 12)

attended the 5th International Symposium on Mega Earthquake Induced Geo-disasters and Long Term Effects organised by the State Key Laboratory of Geohazard Prevention and Geoenvironment Protection in Chengdu, Sichuan, to exchange knowledge on the mitigation of geohazards with experts from Sichuan and around the world.

Addressing the Symposium's opening ceremony, Mr Lam said that both Hong Kong and Sichuan face the challenge of geohazards such as landslides and debris flow. The two places could foster technical exchange and co-operation in areas such as hazard mitigation and research of warning systems.

The GEO has also organised the Sichuan-Hong Kong Technical Exchange on Geo-disasters Prevention cum Exhibition with the Land and Resources Department of Sichuan Province from May 11 to 14 at the Chengdu University of Technology. Through showcasing the development and operation of the Hong Kong Slope Safety System as well as the future direction of improving the System, this exhibition could share the achievements of Hong Kong in managing slope safety and also enhance the research and collaboration between Sichuan and Hong Kong on the mitigation of geohazards.

