

## **QEH announces passing away of COVID-19 patient**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital announced today (July 27) that a 76-year-old female patient confirmed with COVID-19 infection (case no: 2107) passed away last night (July 26).

The patient with chronic disease was admitted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on July 21 due to cough and abdominal pain. Her condition continued to deteriorate and the hospital had communicated with the family about the patient's condition. The patient's family agreed to have Do-Not-Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation if the patient condition further deteriorated. The patient eventually succumbed at 11.23pm yesterday.

The Hospital was saddened about the passing away of the patient and would offer necessary assistance to his family.

Including the above case, 19 COVID-19 confirmed patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

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## **Employers and employees should take precautions against heat stroke**

As the Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate precautions to prevent heat stroke when working in a hot or humid environment.

Heat stroke could occur if an employee works in a hot or humid environment for prolonged periods of time, as the body may fail to regulate its temperature by effective heat dissipation through sweating.

The symptoms of heat-related illnesses include feeling thirsty, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, muscle spasm or even mental confusion, and loss of consciousness or convulsion in severe cases.

Construction workers, cleaning workers, kitchen workers and porters, for example, are more prone to heat stroke as they may be working for long hours in such an environment, especially if appropriate preventive measures have not been taken.

The LD reminds employers to arrange for a suitable assessment of the risk of heat stress in the work environment and take appropriate preventive measures. The LD has produced two leaflets entitled "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Construction Sites" and "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Outdoor Cleansing Workplaces" respectively. Employers engaged in construction or outdoor cleaning work are advised to refer to these checklists in assessing the risk of heat stress at their workplaces. As for heat stress assessment at a workplace in general, employers can refer to a booklet entitled "Risk Assessment for the Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work" produced by the LD.

The LD also reminds employers and employees to take the following precautions to prevent heat stroke:

#### Employers

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- (1) Take heed of the weather report and adopt shift work arrangements for employees to reduce their exposure to the hot environment, or arrange appropriate rest breaks for them during very hot periods;
- (2) Avoid working under direct sunlight and set up temporary sunshade wherever possible;
- (3) Provide cool potable water for employees at all times during work. If necessary, provide drinks containing electrolytes for employees to replenish loss of salt during profuse sweating;
- (4) Minimise physical demands by using tools or mechanical aids at work;
- (5) Increase air flow by enhancing ventilation or air-conditioning as appropriate;
- (6) Isolate heat-generating facilities at the workplace and use insulating materials to minimise heat dissipation to the other work areas; and
- (7) Provide relevant information and training for employees on heat stroke such as preventive measures and first aid treatment.

#### Employees

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- (1) Wear clothing made of suitable materials (for example, cotton) that is loose-fitting and light-coloured to help heat dissipation, minimise heat absorption and allow sweat evaporation;
- (2) Wear a wide-brimmed hat when working outdoors;
- (3) Drink plenty of water or other appropriate beverages with electrolytes to replenish the fluids and salt lost through sweating; and
- (4) Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, rest in a cool or shady place and drink water, and inform supervisors to take appropriate actions immediately.

Some employees may have difficulty in adapting to a hot working environment owing to their own health conditions. Employers should take this into account and consider the recommendations of their doctors when assigning work to these employees.

In addition to the publications on risk assessment, the LD has produced

a leaflet entitled "Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work in a Hot Environment" for the public. The publications can be obtained free of charge from the offices of the Occupational Health Service of the LD, or downloaded from the department's webpage at [www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2\\_9.htm](http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_9.htm).

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, occupational health talks on the prevention of heat stroke at work in a hot environment scheduled to be held in July have been cancelled.

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## **Flag-raising ceremony cancelled**

Owing to the thunderstorm warning, the flag-raising ceremony to be conducted at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wan Chai at 8am today (July 27) will be cancelled.

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## **Very Hot Weather Warning issued**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.

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# Assess the risk of heat stroke to employees

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, they should assess the risk of heat stroke to their employees and adopt effective preventive measures such as providing cool drinking water, setting up temporary sunshade and providing mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion of employees. Employees should drink water regularly and be mindful of their physical condition. If early heat stroke symptoms such as headache and thirst appear, they should rest in a cool or shady place and drink water immediately. They should also inform their supervisors to take appropriate actions.