

Case of invasive Haemophilus influenzae type b infection under CHP investigation

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 2) 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 case involves a 77-year-old man with underlying illnesses, who has presented with fever, productive cough and shortness of breath since December 27 last year. He was admitted to Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital for treatment on December 28 and was subsequently transferred to Tung Wah Eastern Hospital for further management on December 30. The patient is now in a stable condition.

His blood sample tested positive for Hib upon laboratory testing. His clinical diagnoses were pneumonia and septicaemia.

The patient had no recent travel history and his home contact remains 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.