

CHP investigates confirmed Mpox case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) said today (June 18) that it is investigating a confirmed Mpox (also known as Monkeypox) case, and urged the public to be vigilant and avoid close physical contact with persons suspected of contracting Mpox. Meanwhile, high-risk target groups are advised to receive Mpox vaccinations.

The case involves a 20-year-old male. He developed skin ulcer and swollen lymph nodes on June 10 and attended the Yau Ma Tei Male Social Hygiene Clinic of the DH on June 16. He is in stable condition and is being isolated at Princess Margaret Hospital.

An initial investigation revealed that he had not received Mpox vaccination. He had a history of high-risk exposure in Hong Kong during the incubation period, but no epidemiological linkages have been established between this case and other confirmed cases previously recorded in Hong Kong. The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations of the case and will report it to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The WHO held a special meeting on Mpox early this month and confirmed that Mpox remains a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. The WHO continued to appeal to member states to enhance surveillance and prevention and control measures for Mpox, in order to reduce the spread of Mpox. Hong Kong has put in place the Preparedness and Response Plan for Mpox (the Plan) since June 2022 and activated the alert response level under the Plan after the first confirmed case of Mpox in September of the same year. The CHP has implemented a series of measures (including enhanced surveillance, contact tracing, public education and vaccination) which have been effective in preventing local outbreaks of Mpox in the past three years.

Since 2022, a total of 76 Mpox cases (62 local and 14 imported) have been recorded in Hong Kong, of which eight cases were recorded this year. All patients were male. Epidemiological investigations revealed that most cases had history of high-risk sexual behaviours, including having sex with strangers or without wearing condoms when having sex. Hong Kong has not yet detected any new Mpox strain (Clade Ib) cases.

The CHP reminded high-risk target groups to receive Mpox vaccinations in order to lower the risk of infection or the possibility of having more severe symptoms after infection. In addition, persons who experience Mpox symptoms (including rashes, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle pain, and severe headaches) or suspect themselves of being infected are advised to seek medical attention and receive treatment at once. They should not engage in activities with others that may expose others to their skin rash or body fluids. Members of the public should maintain good personal and hand hygiene to prevent virus transmission or infection through contact. They should also avoid close physical contact with persons or animals suspected of being infected.

The CHP has set up an Mpox telephone hotline (2125 2373), which operates from Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm, excluding public holidays. Those who suspect or are concerned that they may have had high-risk contact with confirmed cases, particularly men who have sex with men or those who have sexual practices with strangers, can use the hotline to make enquiries and receive relevant health advice.

Furthermore, the DH provides vaccination services to high-risk groups of Mpox. The following high-risk target groups are eligible for Mpox vaccinations on a voluntary basis:

1. individuals with high-risk sexual practices, e.g. having multiple sexual partners, sex workers, or having a history of sexually transmitted infection within the past 12 months;
2. healthcare workers responsible for caring for patients with confirmed Mpox;
3. laboratory personnel working with zoonotic pox viruses; and
4. animal care personnel with high risk of exposure in case of Mpox occurrences in animals in Hong Kong.

The high-risk target groups can receive Mpox walk-in vaccinations at any of the DH's Social Hygiene Service Clinics (SoCHS) (namely Chai Wan SoCHS, Wan Chai Male SoCHS, Wan Chai Female SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Male SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Female SoCHS, Yung Fung Shee SoCHS, Fanling SoCHS and Tuen Mun SoCHS) and the DH's Yau Ma Tei Integrated Treatment Centre.

Meanwhile, the DH's Kowloon Bay Integrated Treatment Centre and the Hospital Authority's Special Medical Clinics at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital also provide Mpox vaccination services for their clients.

For more details, please visit the CHP's page on [Mpox](#) and [Mpox Vaccination Programme](#).