

CHP investigates influenza A outbreak at primary school in Eastern District

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (November 21) investigating an influenza A outbreak at a primary school in Eastern District, and again reminded the public to maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene against influenza.

The outbreak involves 10 boys and nine girls aged 10 to 11, as well as one female staff member, who developed cough, sore throat and fever since November 13. All of them sought medical attention and none required hospitalisation. They are now in a stable condition.

The nasopharyngeal swab of four students tested positive for influenza A virus.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and advised the school to adopt necessary infection control measures against respiratory infections. The school has been put under medical surveillance.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "To prevent outbreaks of influenza and other respiratory infections, it is of prime importance that children with fever, regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should seek medical advice and avoid school till 48 hours after the fever has subsided. Schools should also measure and record students' body temperature properly."

Schools are reminded to follow the [Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases](#) on preventive and control measures as well as management of outbreaks, which should be reported to the CHP for prompt follow-up.

"Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. Given that influenza vaccines are safe and effective, all persons aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, are recommended to receive Seasonal Influenza Vaccine(SIV) for personal protection," the spokesman said.

Based on past epidemiological patterns, the winter influenza season usually occurs from January to March/April each year. As it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies, we urge eligible persons to receive SIV early for protection against seasonal influenza. Vaccination among family members is key to protecting their personal and family's health."

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccine for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).