

CHP investigates the second highly suspected imported case of novel coronavirus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (January 23) investigating the second highly suspected imported case of novel coronavirus infection. The public is again urged to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene both locally and during travel.

The case involved a 56-year-old male who is a Hong Kong resident with good past health. He travelled to Wuhan on January 10 and took the flight (Air China flight CA8279) from Wuhan to Shenzhen on January 19 and then returned to Hong Kong via Lo Wu Control Point by MTR on the same day by himself. He developed fever since January 18 but reported to have no respiratory symptoms. The patient sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department (A&ED) at Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) on January 19 and hospitalisation was not required. He re-visited the PWH's A&ED for follow-up on January 21 and was admitted for isolation and management by the hospital as his fever did not subside. He is now in stable condition and was transferred to Princess Margaret Hospital for isolation and management today.

The patient's respiratory samples were preliminarily tested positive for novel coronavirus.

The CHP has immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. According to the patient, he neither visited any health care facilities, wet market or seafood market during the incubation period, nor had any exposure to wild animals or poultry or contact with patients with symptoms of pneumonia or upper respiratory tract infection.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the patient lives with his wife at Oceanaire in Ma On Shan. He travelled to Wuhan from January 10 to 19 to visit his parents. His parents and wife have remained asymptomatic so far. The patient also resided in Alva Hotel by Royal in Sha Tin on January 20.

Contact tracing by the CHP is ongoing and relevant authorities and management office have been advised to carry out cleansing and disinfection. Patient's wife, taxi drivers who drove the patient and passengers of the same flight who were sitting at the same row and two rows in front and behind will be regarded as close contacts. Other passengers in the same cabin will be regarded as other contacts. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. Investigation is ongoing.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for the case. Persons who took the flight CA8279 or taxi drivers who drove the patient (January 19, 5 pm

from Heng On Estate to PWH and January 19, 11 pm from PWH to Oceanaire) should call the hotline. The hotline operates from 8am to 5.45pm from today onwards to answer public enquiries.

The CHP has reported the case to the World Health Organization (WHO), National Health Commission (NHC), Health Commission of Guangdong Province and the health authority of Macao.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP will continue to maintain its liaison with the NHC, the WHO and the relevant health authorities, and closely monitor the situation for risk assessment."

The spokesman advised the public to avoid unnecessary travel to Wuhan of Hubei Province. If it is unavoidable to travel to Wuhan, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong.

A dedicated webpage (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html) has been set up by the CHP to provide relevant information and health advice on Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent. Information on the affected countries/areas is available from the following webpage: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection.pdf.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Avoid unnecessary travel to Wuhan of Hubei Province. If it is unavoidable to travel to Wuhan, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days

after returning to Hong Kong;

- Avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible community transmission of novel coronavirus infection. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;

- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;

- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;

- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;

- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;

- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;

- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;

- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and

- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.