

CHP investigates two cases of severe paediatric COVID-19 infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (April 26) investigating two cases of severe paediatric COVID-19 infection and reminded the community to heighten vigilance against respiratory tract infection in winter. The CHP stressed that vaccination can effectively prevent serious COVID-19 cases, and high-risk individuals (including pregnant women) should get vaccinated as soon as possible and receive booster doses at appropriate times. Meanwhile, the CHP also reminded high-risk persons to wear a surgical mask when visiting public places, and the public should also wear a surgical mask when taking public transportation or staying in crowded places.

The first case involves a 6-month-old boy with good past health. He developed a fever and a runny nose on April 20 and visited a private doctor on April 23. He was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department (AED) of Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) on April 24, and was admitted to PMH's paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) for treatment on the same day. His clinical diagnosis was COVID-19 infection complicated with septic shock. One of his home contacts had presented with symptoms and had recovered.

The second case involves a 5-year-old girl with good past health. She presented with cough on April 24 and visited a private doctor on that day. She developed a fever and convulsion yesterday (April 25) and was taken to the AED of PMH. She was admitted to PMH's PICU for treatment on the same day. Her clinical diagnosis was COVID-19 infection complicated with status epilepticus. Her home contacts have all been asymptomatic so far.

Both patients are now in stable condition after treatment. Initial enquiries revealed that both of them had not received COVID-19 vaccine and had no travel histories during the incubation periods. The CHP's investigations against the two cases are ongoing.

The CHP reminded high-risk people who have never been vaccinated or infected with COVID-19 that they should arrange vaccination as soon as possible and adopt additional hygiene measures to protect themselves. Parents are also reminded to arrange COVID-19 vaccination for their babies aged 6 months or above in order to reduce the risk of severe cases and fatalities. In addition, high-risk priority groups are recommended to receive a dose of COVID-19 vaccine at least six months after the last dose or infection, regardless of the number of doses received previously. For more information on the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme and the latest recommendation on the use of vaccines, please visit the CHP's website at www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106934.html.

Currently, there is an increasing trend in the activity of SARS-CoV-2 and seasonal influenza viruses. Apart from vaccination, in order to prevent infection of COVID-19, influenza and other respiratory illnesses as well as

transmission in the community, the public should maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times and note the following:

- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub;
- Cover the mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, perform physical activity regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

The public may visit the [thematic website of COVID-19](#) and the CHP's [COVID-19 & Flu Express](#) for more information.