

## **CE shocked and saddened by serious traffic accident on Fanling Highway**

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, was shocked and saddened by the serious bus accident on the Fanling Highway in which multiple passengers were killed or injured this afternoon (December 18).

Noting that the rescue operation is under way, Mrs Lam has instructed relevant departments including the Social Welfare Department and the Home Affairs Department, together with the Hospital Authority, to provide all appropriate assistance to the injured people as well as family members of the victims. Mrs Lam also expressed her condolences and sympathy to all of them.

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## **Appeal for information on missing woman in Kwai Chung (with photo)**

Police today (December 18) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Kwai Chung.

Cheng Yui-ting, aged 25, went missing after she was last seen on Ta Chuen Ping Street yesterday afternoon (December 17). Her family made a report to Police on the same day.

She is about 1.5 metres tall, 63 kilograms in weight and of medium build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and long black hair. She was last seen wearing a fuchsia long-sleeved jacket, dark yellow trousers and red slippers.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing woman or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1176 or 9689 7445 or email to [rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.



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## [CHP appeals for heightened vigilance against scarlet fever](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 18) appealed to parents, schools/institutions and healthcare professionals for heightened vigilance against scarlet fever (SF) as its activity has been increasing in the past few weeks.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "SF is transmitted through either respiratory droplets or direct contact with infected respiratory secretions and mostly affects children."

According to the CHP's surveillance data, SF activity has been increasing in the past few weeks. The weekly number of SF cases increased from 16 in the week between November 17 and 23 to around 40 in the subsequent two weeks, and further increased to 78 in the week between December 8 and 14. In the first three days of this week (as of December 17), 46 cases had been reported. Regarding SF outbreaks in schools/institutions, as of yesterday (December 17), seven clusters affecting a total of 18 children were recorded in this month.

A total of 1 351 SF cases were reported to the CHP in the first 11 months this year. They comprise 776 males and 575 females aged from 5 months to 64 years (median: 6 years), with the majority (1 250, 92.5 per cent) aged 10 years or below. Most presented with mild illnesses. Among them, 425 cases (31.5 per cent) required hospitalisation, with two cases requiring admission to intensive care units. In 2019, one fatal case has been recorded so far.

The spokesman said, "Locally, while SF has occurred all year round, a seasonal pattern for SF in Hong Kong with higher activity was observed from May to June and from November to March in the past few years. Based on the past epidemiological pattern, we predict that SF activity will remain at a higher level in the coming few months. Parents should take good care of their children in maintaining strict personal, hand and environmental hygiene."

Letters to doctors, hospitals and schools will be issued to alert them to the latest situation. Schools should promptly make a report to the CHP in case of a rise in respiratory illnesses or absentees for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control by the CHP.

SF is a bacterial infection caused by Group A Streptococcus. It usually starts with a fever and sore throat. Headache, vomiting and abdominal pain may also occur. The tongue may have a distinctive strawberry-like (red and bumpy) appearance. A sandpaper texture-like rash would commonly begin on the first or second day of onset over the upper trunk and neck before spreading to the limbs. The rash is usually more prominent in the armpits, elbows and groin areas. It usually subsides after one week and is followed by skin peeling over fingertips, toes and groin areas.

SF is sometimes complicated with middle ear infection; throat abscess; chest infection; meningitis; bone or joint problems; damage to the kidneys, liver and heart; and, rarely, toxic shock syndrome. SF can be effectively treated by appropriate antibiotics. People suspected to have SF should consult a doctor promptly.

There are no vaccines available against SF. Members of the public are advised to take heed of the health advice below:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Always keep hands clean and wash with liquid soap when they are dirtied by mouth and nasal discharges;
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue paper while sneezing or coughing and dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin properly;
- Avoid sharing personal items such as eating utensils and towels;
- Maintain good ventilation; and
- Children suffering from SF should refrain from attending school or child care settings until the fever has subsided and they have been treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

The public may visit the CHP's [SF page](#) for more information.

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## **[CHP investigates case of severe](#)**

# paediatric influenza C infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (December 18) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza C infection and reminded the community to heighten vigilance against influenza.

The case involves a 7-year-old boy with good past health, who has presented with a fever, cough and headache since December 3, and convulsions on December 13. He was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department at Queen Elizabeth Hospital for medical advice on the same day and was admitted. He was subsequently transferred to the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at the hospital for further management.

His nasopharyngeal swab tested positive for influenza C virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza C infection complicated with transient encephalopathy. He is now in stable condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received a seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) for this season and had no travel history during the incubation period. His home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Although the overall local seasonal influenza activity is currently at a low level, members of the public are advised to receive an SIV in a timely manner to better protect themselves in the coming winter influenza season against influenza A and B infections. Particularly, children, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses are urged to get vaccinated as early as possible as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination."

The 2019/20 seasonal influenza vaccination programmes, including the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme and the Government Vaccination Programme, have been launched. As well, the SIV school outreach has been regularised to allow all primary schools to join, and has been extended to kindergartens, child care centres and kindergarten-cum-child care centres as a pilot.

"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 an SIV for personal protection. Vaccinations among family members is key to protecting their personal and family health," the spokesman said.

The public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses:

- Receive an SIV for personal protection;
- 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 as an effective alternative;
- Wash or clean hands frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, or after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs;
- Cover the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin;
- Put on a surgical mask when respiratory symptoms develop;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Avoid going to crowded or poorly ventilated public places; high-risk individuals may consider putting on surgical masks when staying in such places; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

The public may visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#) for more information.

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## [EPD convictions in November](#)

Seventy convictions were recorded in November 2019 for breaches of legislation enforced by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD).

Ten of the convictions were under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance, two were under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, five were under the Noise Control Ordinance, 30 were under the Public Cleansing and Prevention of Nuisances Regulation, 18 were under the Waste Disposal Ordinance, and five were under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance.

A company was fined \$60,000, which was the heaviest fine in November, for using powered mechanical equipment otherwise than in accordance with construction noise permit conditions.