

Kowloon Hospital announces sentinel event

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Kowloon Hospital (KH) announced a sentinel event today (July 15) as follows:

A female patient staying at the psychiatric ward of KH was found unresponsive and with a towel stuffed in her mouth at 6.53am this morning. Ward staff pulled out the towel and performed resuscitation immediately. The patient was subsequently transferred to Kwong Wah Hospital for further resuscitation and was certified dead at 8.12am.

The hospital had all along been providing appropriate treatment, regular assessment and observation of emotional status since the patient was admitted on July 8. Ward staff conducted a regular ward patrol and observed no abnormality of the patient at 6.30am. KH made a report to the Police immediately and will fully co-operate in the investigation.

The hospital is saddened by the incident and will keep close contact with relatives to provide necessary support. The incident has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office via the Advance Incident Reporting System. A Root Cause Analysis Panel will be set up to look into the incident and propose recommendations. The incident has also been reported to the coroner for follow-up.

Update on cluster of Influenza A cases in Tseung Kwan O Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on a cluster of patients infected with Influenza A in a male medical ward, the spokesperson for Tseung Kwan O Hospital made the following update today (July 15):

Two more male patients (aged 63 and 73) in the same ward presented with upper respiratory tract symptoms. Virological tests were positive for Influenza A. One patient is being treated under isolation with stable condition, while the other had recovered and been discharged.

Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to the established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close

surveillance. The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

CHP investigates measles infection case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (July 15) investigating a case of measles infection.

The case involves a 35-year-old man with good past health, who has developed a fever since July 4 and a rash since July 6. He attended the Out-patient Clinic at Hong Kong Baptist Hospital (HKBH) on July 5 and 7. He sought medical advice from a general practitioner on July 8 and was admitted to HKBH for treatment on the same day.

A laboratory test of his respiratory specimen was positive for the measles virus. He is in a stable condition and has been discharged. He reported to have received measles vaccination. He travelled to Tokyo and Taipei during the incubation period but had no travel history during the communicable period.

According to the patient, he did not have contact with measles patients during the incubation period. His home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance.

Upon notification of the case, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing. Investigations are ongoing. The public places the patient visited during the communicable period are listed in the appendix.

A spokesman for the DH said, "Those who might have had contact with the patient during the period of communicability are urged to observe if they have developed measles-related symptoms, and to seek medical treatment immediately if such symptoms appear. If they need to visit any health care facilities during the period of medical surveillance, they should also report whether they have symptoms and prior measles exposure history to the healthcare workers so that appropriate infection control measures can be implemented at the healthcare facilities concerned to prevent any potential spread."

The spokesman explained that measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and, less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. A patient can pass the disease to other persons from four days before to four days after

the appearance of skin rash.

"The incubation period (the period from infection to appearance of illness) of measles ranges from seven days to 21 days. Symptoms of measles include fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes. If symptoms arise, members of the public should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should also avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened immunity, pregnant women and children aged below one. Those suspected to have been infected are advised to seek medical attention as early as possible and reveal relevant contact history of measles to healthcare professionals," the spokesman advised.

"Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. Members of the public who are planning to travel to places with high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received measles vaccination during childhood. The history of measles vaccination in Hong Kong is available in the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). Those who have not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines, with unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against measles are urged to consult their doctor for advice on vaccination at least two weeks before departure," the spokesman said.

Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of rash to prevent spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

For more information on measles, the public may call the 24-hour health education hotline 2833 0111 or visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). For news of measles outbreaks outside Hong Kong or the latest travel health advice, please visit the website of DH's [Travel Health Service](#).

Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 15) reported a suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit. The case is detailed below:

Sex	Male
Age	53
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Camel contact
Hospital	Ruttonjee Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Pending

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed fever or lower respiratory symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the CHP and its Travel Health Service, MERS statistics in affected areas, the CHP's Facebook Page and YouTube Channel, and the World Health Organization's latest news for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's health advice on MERS.

Swordfish sashimi sample detected with mercury exceeding legal limit

â€‹The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (July 15) that a sample of swordfish sashimi was found to contain a metal contaminant, mercury, at a level exceeding the legal limit. The CFS is following up on the case.

A spokesman for the CFS said, "The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from an online shop for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that it contained mercury at a level of 0.96 parts per million (ppm), exceeding the legal limit of 0.5 ppm."

The spokesman said that the CFS had informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and had requested the vendor to stop sales of the affected batch of the product. The Centre is tracing the source of the product concerned.

"Mercury may affect the nervous system, particularly the developing brain. At high levels, mercury can affect foetal brain development, and affect vision, hearing, muscle co-ordination and memory in adults. Furthermore, as some international organisations such as the World Health Organization have pointed out, consuming predatory fish species is the main source of mercury intake for human beings. The report of the CFS' Total Diet Study has also pointed out that large fish or predatory fish species may contain high mercury levels (for example, tuna, alfonsino, shark, swordfish, marlin, orange roughy and king mackerel). Hence, groups particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of mercury, such as pregnant women, women planning pregnancy and young children, should opt for fish that are smaller in size for consumption and avoid consumption of the above-mentioned types of fish which may contain high mercury levels to minimise the health risk posed to the foetus, infants and young children by excessive exposure to metal contaminants in food," he added.

According to the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations (Cap 132V), any person who sells food with metallic contamination above the legal limit may be prosecuted and is liable upon conviction to a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

"People are advised to maintain a balanced and varied diet. To avoid health risks posed by excessive intake of metallic contaminants, pregnant women, women planning pregnancy and young children should avoid eating large or predatory fish," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the case and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.