

# CHP investigates a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 4) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The case involves a 7-year-old boy with good past health, who has presented with fever, cough and runny nose since December 29 and convulsion on January 3. He attended North District Hospital for medical advice on January 3 and was admitted to the paediatric intensive care unit of Prince of Wales Hospital on the same day for further management. He is now in a stable condition.

His nasopharyngeal aspirate tested positive for influenza A (H1) virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with meningoencephalitis.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. His younger sister had upper respiratory tract infection (URI) symptoms recently and was admitted to Union Hospital for treatment. She is now recovered and was discharged. His father and grandmother also had URI symptoms and sought medical attention but no hospitalisation is required. Three of them are all in a stable condition. His other home contact has remained asymptomatic so far.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"Hong Kong has entered the 2018-19 winter influenza season. We anticipate that local seasonal influenza activity will continue to rise in the coming weeks and remain at an elevated level for some time. Members of the public should remain vigilant for protection against influenza," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Particularly, children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. They should promptly seek medical advice if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people," the spokesman added.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible 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](#).

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## [Latest test results of opening-up investigation in second stage of holistic assessment strategy for Hung Hom Station Extension under Shatin to Central Link Project](#)

â€‹The latest test results of the opening-up investigation in the second stage of the holistic assessment strategy for the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project (as at January 4) are now available at the Highways Department's website for the SCL project ([www.hyd.gov.hk/en/road\\_and\\_railway/railway\\_projects/scl/index.html](http://www.hyd.gov.hk/en/road_and_railway/railway_projects/scl/index.html)) for reference by the public.

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## [Appeal on in-patient missing from Kowloon Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the Kowloon Hospital (KH) made the following appeal today (January 4) regarding an incident of an in-patient who absconded from the hospital:

A 56-year-old male patient who was admitted to a male ward of Department of Respiratory Medicine in KH for the treatment of open tuberculosis with isolation order issued by the Department of Health absconded from the ward on January 2. The hospital security guards on the scene immediately chased the patient but in vain. No one was injured in the incident.

The staff of the ward reported to the police immediately and searched the hospital. The hospital is very concerned about the incident and the patient's relatives were informed immediately. The incident was reported to the Tuberculosis and Chest Service, Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health. The hospital will fully provide assistance to the police for the search.

In view that the patient had been hospitalized for treatment of tuberculosis for one month and that tuberculosis transmission often requires a long period of close contact, the risk is relatively low.

The patient is about 1.64 meters tall, thin build, black short hair. The hospital appeals to the public to contact the Police or call the hospital hotline (3129 7111) if they know the whereabouts of the patient.

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## **Imported prepackaged lemon juice concentrate suspected to contain undeclared preservative**

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (January 4) announced that a batch of prepackaged lemon juice concentrate produced in Italy was suspected to contain a preservative, sulphur dioxide, but it was not declared on the product's food label. The CFS advised consumers who are allergic to sulphur dioxide to refrain from consuming the affected batch of the product. The trade should also stop using or selling the product concerned immediately.

Product details are as follows:

Product name: Würzmittel mit Zitronensaft (lemon juice concentrate)  
Product brand: Piacelli Citrilemon  
Place of origin: Italy  
Packing: 200 millilitres per pack  
Best-before-date: July 14, 2020

"The CFS received a notification from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) of the European Commission that the above-mentioned product was suspected to contain sulphur dioxide but undeclared on the food label. According to information provided by the RASFF, a local importer, Coils Electronic Co. Ltd. had imported the affected product into Hong Kong," the spokesman said.

The CFS immediately contacted the importer concerned for follow up. Preliminary investigation found that importer had imported the affected batch of product which were on sale in its chain stores. The CFS has instructed the importer to stop sale and remove from shelves the affected batch of product and initiate a recall. Members of the public may call the importer's hotline at 3960 9349 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

Sulphur dioxide is a water soluble preservative of low toxicity. However, susceptible individuals who are allergic to this preservative may

experience breathing difficulties, headache and nausea.

The CFS will alert the trade, continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action. Investigation is on-going.

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## **CHP investigates three cases of severe paediatric influenza A infection**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 4) investigating three cases of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The first case involves a 4-year-old boy with good past health, who has presented with fever, cough with sputum and runny nose since December 28. He was admitted to Hong Kong Baptist Hospital (HKBH) on December 31 and was subsequently transferred to the paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) of Kwong Wah Hospital for further management today. He is now in a serious condition. His nasopharyngeal swab tested positive for influenza A(H3) virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had received seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) for the current season and had travelled to the United Kingdom from December 12 to 26. His elder brother was diagnosed with pneumonia and admitted to HKBH and is now in a stable condition, while his father and grandmother had upper respiratory tract infection symptoms recently and had already sought medical attention without hospitalisation. His other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The second case involves a 4-year-old girl with good past health, who has presented with fever, cough, runny nose, decreased appetite and vomiting since December 26. She was brought to the Accident and Emergency Department of Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) yesterday and was admitted to the PICU of PMH on the same day. She is now in a serious condition. Her nasopharyngeal aspirate (NPA) tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received SIV for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. Her father and elder sister had upper respiratory tract infection symptoms recently and are in a stable condition. Her other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The third case involves a 6-year-old girl with good past health, who has presented with fever, cough and vomiting since January 1. She was admitted to

United Christian Hospital (UCH) yesterday and was subsequently transferred to the PICU of UCH for further management on the same day. She is now in a critical condition. Her NPA tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A complicated with encephalitis.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received SIV for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. Her younger brother had influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms since December 31 and had already sought medical attention and recovered. Her other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"Hong Kong has entered the 2018-19 winter influenza season. We anticipate that local seasonal influenza activity will continue to rise in the coming weeks and remain at an elevated level for some time. Members of the public should remain vigilant for protection against influenza," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Particularly, children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. They should promptly seek medical advice if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people," the spokesman added.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible 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](#).