

CHP investigates case of invasive meningococcal infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (December 26) investigating a case of invasive meningococcal infection, a communicable disease transmitted by direct contact with droplets from carriers or infected persons.

The case involves a 89-year-old woman with underlying illnesses, who had presented with fever, malaise and cough with sputum since December 22. She was admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) on the same day and passed away at PMH on December 23. Her clinical diagnoses were pneumonia and sepsis.

Her blood sample tested positive for *Neisseria meningitidis* upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no recent travel history. One of her home contacts is currently hospitalised for other medical condition, while her other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. The CHP's investigation is continuing.

"Meningococcal infection is caused by a bacterium known as meningococcus. It is mainly transmitted by direct contact through respiratory secretions, including droplets from the nose and throat, from infected persons. The incubation period varies from two to 10 days, and is commonly three or four days," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The clinical picture may vary. Severe illness may result when the bacteria invade the bloodstream (meningococcaemia) or the membranes that envelop the brain and spinal cord (meningococcal meningitis).

Meningococcaemia is characterised by sudden onset of fever, intense headache, purpura, shock and even death in severe cases. Meningococcal meningitis is characterised by high fever, severe headache and stiff neck followed by drowsiness, vomiting, fear of bright light, or a rash. It can cause brain damage or even death. The brain damage may lead to intellectual impairment, mental retardation, hearing loss and electrolyte imbalance. Invasive meningococcal infections can be complicated by arthritis, inflammation of the heart muscle, inflammation of the posterior chamber of the eye or chest infection.

Meningococcal infection is a serious illness. Patients should be treated promptly with antibiotics.

To prevent meningococcal infection, members of the public are advised to take heed of the following measures:

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly, especially when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, e.g. after sneezing, and clean hands

- with alcohol-based handrub when they are not visibly soiled;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing, hold the spit with tissue, dispose of nasal and mouth discharge in a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands immediately;
 - Avoid crowded places;
 - Avoid close contact with patients who have fever or severe headache;
 - Travellers to high-risk areas may consult doctors for meningococcal vaccination; and
 - Travellers returning from high-risk areas should seek medical advice if they become ill and should discuss their recent travel history with their doctor.

The public may visit the CHP's [website](#) for more information on meningococcal infection.

[Transcript of media session by Secretary for Justice](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, at a media session at the Hong Kong International Airport today (December 26):

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Reporter: What led to the decision to drop the case, and why has the precedent practice of seeking independent legal advice not being followed?

Secretary for Justice: The policy of the Department of Justice (DoJ) in dealing with prosecutorial decisions has been to make the decision within the department itself. Therefore, unless the case involves a member of the DoJ, there would not be outside counsel being engaged. The decision as to why a particular case is or is not prosecuted, is a matter that relates to the case, and I cannot comment on any specific case, in particular any ones that are now under judicial review or other judicial processes.

Reporter: Two questions. The Chief Executive has also urged you to give further explanation regarding the public's questions on CY Leung's case, so are you saying that the Chief Executive also has misunderstanding over the DoJ's work? The second question, is this your original plan to go on leave while the DoJ released such controversial decision?

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Secretary for Justice: The Department of Justice has made an informed and professional decision that what has been and can be told to the public has already been set out in our press release on December 12. There is nothing further to add from a professional legal angle. As to why certain people in the media as I have noticed, has recorded and stated that perhaps there are more to add, I cannot comment, and I do not wish to comment because there

could be other reasons beyond the legal analysis. The Department of Justice is only dealing with legal issues. Political issues have nothing to do with us, so I will not comment on that.â€‹
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The second point relates to the leave that I am taking. The decision to not further investigate is of course a decision that is made within the process of the law enforcement agency, and I am not going to look into any specific matter. Therefore, when that is done, the press release has been issued on December 12, making it absolutely clear what can be said has been said. Therefore, the leave that I have taken, which has been planned over a month ago, has nothing to do with the very spurious suggestion that I was avoiding the matter.â€‹

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 26) 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	Female
Age	14 months
Affected area involved	Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Princess Margaret Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Negative

"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](#).

[FEHD orders light refreshment restaurant in Jordan to suspend business for 14 days](#)

The Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene has ordered a light refreshment restaurant in Jordan to suspend business for 14 days as the operator repeatedly breached the Food Business Regulation (FBR) by extending the business area illegally and storing utensils in open space.

The restaurant, located at Flat D on the ground floor at 89 Shanghai Street, was ordered to suspend business from today (December 26) to January 8, 2019.

"In July and September this year, two convictions for the above-mentioned breaches were recorded against the restaurant. A total fine of \$9,000 was levied by the court and 15 demerit points were registered against the licensee under the department's demerit points system. The contraventions resulted in the 14-day licence suspension," a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said.

The licensee of the restaurant had a record of two convictions for extending the business area illegally in October last year and June this year. A total fine of \$15,000 was levied and 30 demerit points were registered. The breaches led to licence suspension for seven days in August this year.

The spokesman reminded licensees of food premises to comply with the FBR, or their licences could be suspended or cancelled.

Licensed food premises are required to exhibit a sign, at a conspicuous place near the main entrance, indicating that the premises have been licensed. A list of licensed food premises is available on the FEHD's website (www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/index.html).

Car park at Hong Kong Wetland Park full

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The car park at Hong Kong Wetland Park is full. Motorists going to the Park can use the nearby public car parks at Tin Heng Estate, Tin Yat Estate, Grandeur Terrace or Tin Yip Road.

Members of the public are encouraged to take public transport to the Park.