

CHP appeals for heightened vigilance against melioidosis infection following extreme weather conditions

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (September 8) appealed to members of the public for heightened vigilance against melioidosis infection following extreme weather conditions and urged them to maintain personal and environmental hygiene. The CHP also specifically reminded high-risk groups, including the elderly and people with underlying diseases, to avoid contact with soil or muddy water after typhoons or storms with a view to lowering infection risk.

Melioidosis is a disease caused by the bacterium *Burkholderia pseudomallei*. *Burkholderia pseudomallei* is widespread in soil and muddy water, particularly common in moist clay soil. Humans can become infected through contact with contaminated soil and surface water (especially through skin abrasions/wounds); inhalation of contaminated dust/water droplets; and ingestion of contaminated water. Those with underlying diseases or immunosuppression have higher risks of contracting the disease.

According to overseas literature and local data, *Burkholderia pseudomallei* in the soil and muddy water may be exposed to the ground after typhoons or storms, and the bacteria would spread more easily with strong wind and storms. As such, infection cases are more common after typhoons or storms.

In view of the recent disturbance caused by super typhoon Saola and torrential rain brought by typhoon Haikui, the CHP again reminded members of the public, in particular high-risk groups such as those with underlying diseases, to avoid contact with soil or muddy water as far as practicable, to prevent melioidosis infection.

Melioidosis is an endemic disease in Hong Kong and human infection cases have been recorded in Hong Kong each year. A total of nine melioidosis infection cases have been recorded in Hong Kong so far this year and 46 cases were recorded in 2022. In light of the melioidosis cases recorded last year, the CHP and the Water Supplies Department have implemented a series of precautionary and monitoring measures, including the installation of high efficiency particulate air filters at the ventilators of all fresh water service reservoirs in Hong Kong, enhancing residual chlorine levels in drinking water, continual monitoring of residual chlorine level of fresh water in service reservoirs and consumers' taps, as well as health education and surveillance of infection cases. No abnormalities were detected from all surveillance results so far, including those conducted after typhoons and heavy rain, while the drinking water quality monitoring results have consistently been in compliance with the Hong Kong Drinking Water Standards.

A spokesman for the CHP explained that person-to-person transmission

and animal-to-human transmission are rare but may occur through contact with the blood or body fluids of an infected person. Melioidosis may present with localised infection (such as cutaneous abscess), pneumonia, meningoen­cephalitis, sepsis, or chronic suppurative infection. Depending on the site of infection, common symptoms of melioidosis include fever, headache, localised pain or swelling, ulceration, chest pain, cough, haemoptysis, and swelling of regional lymph nodes. The CHP appealed again to members of the public to seek medical advice if they develop symptoms, in particular people with diabetes or other immunocompromised conditions, in order to receive appropriate medical diagnosis and treatment.

The CHP reminded members of the public to take the following preventive measures against infection:

- Avoid contact with contaminated soil;
- Wear appropriate protective clothing or footwear when participating in activities with possible contact with soil or water, e.g. using gloves and wearing boots;
- If exposure to contaminated water or soil is inevitable, high-risk individuals should wear a mask, gloves and boots;
- Wash or shower after exposure to contaminated water or soil;
- Always clean any wounds as soon as possible and cover any cuts or grazes with waterproof dressings;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water after handling soil or gardening;
- Observe food hygiene and avoid drinking raw water; and
- Travellers can contract the disease through outdoor water sports. Risk of infection can be minimised by avoiding exposure to water sources (such as rivers, ponds or lakes) that might be contaminated.

For more information on melioidosis, please visit the website of the CHP www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/24/101110.html.

Early closure of Shau Kei Wan Methadone Clinic today

In light of the road conditions caused by the extreme weather, the Department of Health announced that Shau Kei Wan Methadone Clinic (providing evening services only originally) will be closed today (September 8). Those who have been receiving methadone treatment there can receive their daily dose at other methadone clinics.

Please visit the following website for the information of methadone clinics: www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_mc.html.

Attempted murder and suicide in Sau Mau Ping

Police are investigating an attempted murder and suicide case in Sau Mau Ping happened in the small hours today (September 8), in which a 56-year-old man died.

At about 1.20am, Police received reports from residents that some were fighting inside a unit in Tat Chui House, Po Tat Estate.

Police officers sped to the scene. A 42-year-old woman was found lying inside a unit in Tat Chui House, Po Tat Estate. Officers later found that a man was lying on the podium of Tat Chui House, Po Tat Estate. He was suspected to have fallen from height. The woman was rushed to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in semi-conscious state. The man was certified dead at scene.

Initial investigation revealed that the man had a dispute with his 42-year-old wife earlier, and the man assaulted the woman with sharp objects. The man later jumped from a unit.

Post-mortem examinations will be conducted later to ascertain the cause of the deceased.

Active investigation by the District Crime Squad 1 of Sau Mau Ping District is underway. Anyone who witnessed the incident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers on 3661 6237.

CHP investigates confirmed Mpox case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) said today (September 8) that it is investigating a confirmed Mpox (also known as Monkeypox) case, and urged the public to heighten vigilance and avoid close physical contact with persons suspected of contracting Mpox. Meanwhile, high-risk target groups are advised to receive Mpox vaccination.

The case involves a 42-year-old male patient with good past health. He had presented with localised rash since August 28 and later visited the Wan Chai Male Social Hygiene Clinic of the DH on September 6. He is in stable condition and arrangements were made for him to be admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital. According to the patient, he had high-risk exposure in Hong Kong during the incubation period.

An initial investigation revealed that he had visited the Mainland during the incubation period. According to the patient, he only had high-risk exposure in Hong Kong during the incubation period. No epidemiological linkages between this case and other confirmed cases recorded in Hong Kong earlier have been found so far. The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations of the case, including the high-risk exposure history of the patient during the incubation period, contact tracing and infection source investigations. The CHP will report the case to the World Health Organization.

A total of 44 confirmed Mpox cases have been recorded in Hong Kong so far. The CHP appeals again to high-risk target groups to receive Mpox vaccination with a view to lowering the risk of infection or the possibility of having more severe symptoms after infection. Persons who experience Mpox symptoms (including rashes, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle pain, and severe headaches) or suspect themselves of being infected are advised to seek medical attention and receive treatment at once, and they should not engage in activities with others during which other people may have contact with their skin rash or body fluids. Members of the public should maintain good personal and hand hygiene to prevent virus transmission or infection through contact. They should also avoid close physical contact with persons or animals suspected of infection.

The CHP had earlier set up an Mpox telephone hotline (2125 2373). The hotline operates from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5pm, which enables those who suspect or are concerned they have had high-risk contact with confirmed patients, in particular men who have sex with men or those who have sexual practices with strangers, to make enquiries and receive relevant health advice.

The Government has activated the Alert level of the preparedness and response plan for the disease in September last year and will continue to assess the risk in view of the latest scientific evidence and situation, and implement corresponding control measures.

The Mpox vaccination programme for high-risk groups commenced on October 5 last year. Under the programme, the following high-risk target groups can receive Mpox vaccination on a voluntary basis:

1. Individuals with high-risk sexual practices, e.g. having multiple sexual partners, sex workers, or having a history of sexually transmitted infection within the past 12 months;
2. Healthcare workers responsible for caring of patients with confirmed Mpox;
3. Laboratory personnel working with zoonotic pox viruses; and
4. Animal care personnel with high risk of exposure in case of Mpox occurrence in animals in Hong Kong.

High-risk target groups can receive Mpox vaccination at the designated Mpox vaccination centre (situated at 2/F, CHP building, 147C Argyle Street, Mong Kok) by appointment through email (mpv_booking@dh.gov.hk) or telephone

booking line (2547 1900) during office hours. They can also receive Mpox walk-in vaccinations at all of the DH's Social Hygiene Service Clinics (Sochs) (namely Chai Wan Sochs, Wan Chai Male Sochs, Wan Chai Female Sochs, Yau Ma Tei Male Sochs, Yau Ma Tei Female Sochs, Yung Fung Shee Sochs, Fanling Sochs and Tuen Mun Sochs). Further information of the clinics including their locations is available

at www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcf.html and www.dh.gov.hk/english/tele/tele_chc/tele_chc_shcm.html.

Meanwhile, the DH's Integrated Treatment Centre in Kowloon Bay, and the Hospital Authority's Special Medical Clinics at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital will continue to provide Mpox vaccination services for their clients.

For more details, please visit the CHP's page on [Mpox](#).

[Cluster of COVID-19 cases in Kwai Chung Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Kwai Chung Hospital (KCH) made the following announcement today (September 8):

Seventeen female patients (aged 32 to 81) in a post-admission ward of KCH have presented with fever or respiratory symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19 since September 2.

All patients are treated in isolation and one patient was transferred to Princess Margaret Hospital. All patients are in stable condition. Admission and visiting arrangements for the ward concerned have been suspended. Thorough cleaning and disinfection have been conducted in the ward concerned, while infection control measures are enhanced.

The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation of the patients. The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.