

# CHP investigates two outbreaks of acute gastroenteritis at kindergartens

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (May 29) investigating two outbreaks of acute gastroenteritis (AGE) at kindergartens in Kowloon Tong and Tuen Mun, and hence reminded the public and management of institutions to maintain personal and environmental hygiene against AGE.

The outbreak in Kowloon Tong involves 37 students, comprising 29 boys and eight girls aged 3 to 4. They developed vomiting and diarrhoea since May 23. Twenty-one of them sought medical attention, three of whom required hospitalisation and two of them have been discharged after management. The stool specimen of one of the hospitalised students tested positive for norovirus. All patients are in stable condition.

According to the CHP's epidemiological investigation, there were students in the outbreak who vomited on school buses. The CHP also confirmed that the affected students did not consume common food or meal boxes, revealing that the outbreak has a higher chance of person-to-person transmission or environmental contamination, while the chance of involving food poisoning is relatively low.

The outbreak in Tuen Mun involves 37 students, comprising 21 boys and 16 girls aged 2 to 5. They developed fever, vomiting and diarrhoea since May 23. Twenty-five of them sought medical attention, six of whom required hospitalisation. All patients are in stable condition.

According to the CHP's epidemiological investigation, two of the students in the outbreak had developed vomiting on May 23. Other students developed symptoms including vomiting and diarrhoea from May 24 to 28. The CHP also confirmed that the affected students did not consume common food or meal boxes, revealing that the outbreak has a higher chance of person-to-person transmission or environmental contamination, while the chance of involving food poisoning is relatively low.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and provided health advice to the staff of the schools concerning proper and thorough disinfection, proper disposal of vomitus, and personal and environmental hygiene. The schools have been put under medical surveillance.

Investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP reminded that alcohol-based handrub should not substitute hand hygiene with liquid soap and water, as alcohol does not effectively kill some viruses frequently causing AGE, e.g. norovirus. Members of the public are advised to take heed of the following preventive measures against gastroenteritis:

- Ensure proper personal hygiene;
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling food and eating, after using the toilet or after changing diapers;
- Wear gloves when disposing of vomitus or faecal matter, and wash hands afterwards;
- Clean and disinfect contaminated areas or items promptly and thoroughly with diluted household bleach (by adding one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite to 49 parts of water). Wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Pay attention to food hygiene;
- Use separate utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Avoid food that is not thoroughly cooked;
- Drink boiled water; and
- Do not patronise unlicensed food premises or food stalls.

The public may visit the CHP's website ([www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk)) or call the DH's Health Education Infoline (2833 0111) for more information.

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## **CHP investigates hand, foot and mouth disease outbreaks in two child care centres**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 29) investigating two outbreaks of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) at two child care centres, and again urged the public, schools and institutions to maintain strict hand, personal and environmental hygiene.

The first outbreak involves 21 toddlers (including 11 boys and 10 girls) aged 8 to 26 months at a child care centre in Kowloon City. They developed fever, oral ulcers and rash on their hands or feet since May 11. All patients sought medical attention and one of them required hospitalisation, who has been discharged after treatment. All patients are in stable condition. The respiratory specimen of one affected boy tested positive for enterovirus (EV) upon laboratory testing.

The second outbreak involves 23 children (including 12 boys and 11 girls) aged 2 to 4 at a residential child care centre in Wan Chai. They developed oral ulcers and rash on their hands or feet since May 18. All patients sought medical attention and none required hospitalisation. They are in stable condition.

Officers of the CHP have advised the management of both centres on necessary infection controls and preventive measures. The centres have been put under medical surveillance. Investigations into the two outbreaks are

ongoing.

"HFMD is common in children, while adult cases may also appear. It is usually caused by EVs such as Coxsackie virus and EV71. It is clinically characterised by maculopapular rashes or vesicular lesions occurring on the palms, soles and other parts of the body such as the buttocks and thighs. Vesicular lesions and ulcers may also be found in the oral cavity. Sometimes patients present mainly with painful ulcers at the back of the mouth, namely herpangina, without a rash on the hands or feet," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"HFMD occurs throughout the year with the usual peak occurring from May to July. A smaller peak may also occur from October to December. According to the CHP's latest surveillance data, the local activity of HFMD has increased. As young children are more susceptible, parents should stay alert to their health. Institutional outbreaks may occur where HFMD can easily spread among young children with close contact," the spokesman added.

To prevent HFMD, members of the public, and especially the management of institutions, should take heed of the following preventive measures:

- Maintain good air circulation;
- Wash hands before meals and after going to the toilet or handling diapers or other stool-soiled materials;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly, especially 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 oral discharges properly;
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as furniture, toys and commonly shared items with 1:99 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite with 99 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes, and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
- Use absorbent disposable towels to wipe away obvious contaminants such as respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, and then disinfect the surface and neighbouring areas with 1:49 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite with 49 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
- Children who are ill should be kept out of school until their fever and rash have subsided and all vesicles have dried and crusted;
- Avoid going to overcrowded places; and
- Parents should maintain close communication with schools to let them know the latest situation of the sick children.

â€‹The public may visit the CHP's page on [HFMD and EV71 infection](#) and [Public Health Advice for Play Facilities](#) for more information.

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## Operation of HKeToll at Lion Rock Tunnel generally smooth

The Transport Department (TD) said today (May 29) that the operation of the HKeToll has been generally smooth since its implementation at Lion Rock Tunnel from 5am yesterday (May 28).

The TD's Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre has been closely monitoring the traffic situation at Lion Rock Tunnel. The overall traffic flow has been smooth in general. Motorists can adapt to the new traffic arrangements after the implementation of the HKeToll. The traffic towards Kowloon started to move slowly from Kak Tin Village without obvious traffic queue during the peak half-hour this morning (from 8am to 8.30am) and was relieved as compared with the traffic queue to Shui Chuen O Estate before the implementation of the HKeToll. It is anticipated that the traffic condition in the vicinity of Lion Rock Tunnel would further improve after the familiarisation of motorists and the demolition of toll booths.

From 6am to 6pm today, of about 57 400 vehicles passing through Lion Rock Tunnels, about 94 per cent have been detected with a vehicle tag.

On the other hand, the toll service provider has issued about 1 000 surcharge notices by post and e-contact means registered with the TD to impose \$175 surcharge to vehicle owners who used Tsing Sha Control Area on May 7 without paying the tunnel toll. If the vehicle owners still do not to pay the toll and surcharge within 21 calendar days of the delivery date of the surcharge notice, an additional surcharge of \$350 will be imposed. The additional surcharge, together with the unpaid toll and initial surcharge of \$175, must be settled within the next 21 calendar days. Evading toll payment is liable to a fine of \$5,000 (per trip). The TD will not renew vehicle licences that have outstanding toll and surcharge payment associated with them.

The TD once again reminds that vehicle owners must pay the toll within 14 business days after passing through a tunnel. He/she can log on the HKeToll website ([hketoll.gov.hk](http://hketoll.gov.hk)) or mobile app to check the outstanding toll and pay, either by credit card or by following the instructions to generate a QR code to either pay via the Faster Payment System or at 7-Eleven convenience stores by cash. The HKeToll website provides a video to guide vehicle owners on how to pay outstanding tolls online. Payments of outstanding tolls can also be made at the four customer service centres and four service outlets.

If vehicle owners have any enquiries about paying an outstanding toll, setting up an automatic payment means or the HKeToll, they should call the 24-hour customer service hotline at 3853 7333 or visit the customer service

centres, service outlets or consultation counters at designated MTR stations and New Territories District Offices. The staff will provide appropriate assistance. The locations and service hours of the above-mentioned facilities are in the Annex.

The TD once again appeals to vehicle owners to complete the three steps for HKeToll services as soon as possible: (1) install a vehicle tag, (2) open an HKeToll account and (3) set up an automatic payment means, so as to fully enjoy the convenience of the HKeToll.

The HKeToll has been successfully implemented at the three tunnels connecting Sha Tin and Kowloon (i.e. Tsing Sha Control Area, Shing Mun Tunnels and Lion Rock Tunnel) as the first phase. It will be implemented at the three road harbour crossings in the next phase. Details and exact dates will be announced later.

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## **Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill 2023 to be introduced into LegCo for First Reading and Second Reading**

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) will hold a meeting on Wednesday (May 31) at 11 am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. During the meeting, the Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill 2023 will be introduced into the Council for the First Reading and the Second Reading. The Second Reading debate on the Bill will be adjourned.

The Betting Duty (Amendment) Bill 2023 will also be introduced into the Council for the First Reading and the Second Reading. The Second Reading debate on the Bill will be adjourned.

On Member's Bill, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Amendment) Bill 2023 will be introduced into the Council for the First Reading and the Second Reading. The Second Reading debate on the Bill will be adjourned.

On Members' motions, Mr Kenneth Leung will move a motion on formulating a comprehensive population policy. The motion is set out in Appendix 1. Mr Yang Wing-kit, Mr Dennis Leung, Mr Benson Luk and Ms Yung Hoi-yan will move amendments to Mr Kenneth Leung's motion.

Mr Chan Chun-ying will move a motion on facing up to the management and maintenance responsibilities of the Tenants Purchase Scheme units. The motion is set out in Appendix 2. Mr Leung Man-kwong and Mr Chan Hok-fung will move

amendments to Mr Chan Chun-ying's motion.

Members will also ask the Government 22 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)). Members of the public can watch or listen to the meeting via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meeting at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

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## **SHYA meets with delegation of Shandong Provincial Committee of the Communist Youth League of China (with photos)**

The Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak, joined by the Commissioner for Youth, Mr Wallace Lau, met with the delegation of the Shandong Provincial Committee of the Communist Youth League of China today (May 29) to exchange views on enhancing youth development and exchanges between Shandong and Hong Kong.

Miss Mak welcomed the delegation led by the Secretary of the Shandong Provincial Committee of the Communist Youth League of China, Mr Yin Shiyi. She said that Hong Kong and Shandong have always maintained close ties and frequently co-operated in different fields such as business, culture, youth and innovation and technology. The Youth Development Blueprint, which was recently promulgated by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB), outlined the overall vision and guiding principles for the Government's long-term youth development work in the future. Among other things, it proposes promoting young people's understanding of the country and encouraging young people to integrate into the overall development of the country.

With the resumption of normal travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and the rest of the world, the HYAB is resuming youth internship and exchange activities in a gradual and orderly manner, including Thematic Youth Internship Programmes to the Mainland and the Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland. These programmes offer young people exchange and internship opportunities in different Mainland provinces and cities including Shandong.

Miss Mak looks forward to exploring proposals to jointly promote youth development and exchanges with Shandong so as to provide more opportunities for Hong Kong young people to enhance their awareness and understanding of the country.

