

CHP reminds public on precautions against cold weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 28) reminded the public, particularly the elderly and people with chronic illnesses, to adopt appropriate measures to protect their health in view of the cold weather.

A spokesman for the CHP said that cold weather can easily trigger or exacerbate diseases, especially among the elderly and persons suffering from heart disease, respiratory illness or other chronic illnesses.

"Elderly people have less insulating fat beneath their skin to keep them warm and their body temperature control mechanism may be weaker. Their body may not be able to appropriately respond to the cold weather," the spokesman said.

Some senior persons may have decreased mobility, which can in turn slow down their ability to generate and conserve body heat. It may also undermine the health of elderly people and lower their metabolic rate, subsequently causing their body to generate less heat. For people with chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, diabetes and endocrine disorders, the sharp temperature drop may induce serious diseases. They should pay careful attention to keeping warm.

The CHP reminded the public, in particular the elderly and persons with chronic illnesses, to adopt the following preventive measures:

- Take note of the weather forecast. Wear warm clothing, including hats, scarves, gloves and socks accordingly;
- Consume sufficient food to ensure adequate calorie intake;
- Perform regular physical activity to facilitate blood circulation and heat production;
- Stay in a warm environment and avoid prolonged outdoor exposure;
- Use heaters with care, and maintain adequate indoor ventilation; and
- Seek medical advice if feeling unwell.

In addition, the public should avoid alcoholic beverages.

"Drinking alcohol cannot keep you warm. Alcohol accelerates the loss of body heat through dilated blood vessels, resulting in chilling instead," the spokesman said.

"Parents should ensure that babies are sufficiently warm, but it is also important to keep babies lightly clothed to avoid overheating them," the spokesman added.

Parents should observe the following safety measures when putting their children to bed:

- Keep the room well ventilated and at a comfortable temperature;
- Always place babies on their back to sleep. Leave their head, face and arms uncovered during sleep;
- Babies do not need pillows. Place babies on a firm and well-fitted mattress to sleep. Avoid soft objects, pillows and loose bedding;
- Let babies sleep in a cot placed in the parents' room and near their bed; and
- Maintain a smoke-free environment.

In addition, seasonal influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications. Persons at higher risk of getting influenza and its complications, including the elderly and children, should receive seasonal influenza vaccination early. Please see details of the vaccination schemes on the [CHP's website](#).

A person who gets influenza and COVID-19 at the same time may be more seriously ill and would have a higher risk of death. Influenza vaccination may reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and the length of stay. It is important to receive both seasonal influenza vaccination and COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible, in particular for children and elderly persons residing in the community or residential care homes. The public should also maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against respiratory illnesses and note the following:

- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub;
- Cover the mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, perform physical activity regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

Food-borne diseases, particularly those linked to hot pot cuisine, are also common in cold weather. The following preventive measures should be

taken:

- Wash hands before handling and consuming food;
- Do not patronise unlicensed vendors or those with poor hygienic standards while selecting food;
- Wash and cook all food thoroughly;
- Vegetables should be washed thoroughly in clean running water before cooking and consumption. When appropriate, scrub vegetables with hard surfaces with a clean brush to remove dirt and substances, including pesticide residues and contaminants, from the surface and crevices;
- Shrimps should be fully cooked until the shells turn red and the flesh turns white and opaque;
- For shellfish like scallops and geoduck, scrub the shells thoroughly and remove internal organs;
- Most hot pot ingredients should be stored in a refrigerator at 4 degrees Celsius or below, while frozen food should be stored in a freezer at -18 degrees C or below;
- Never use raw eggs as a dipping sauce for hot pot; and
- Use different sets of chopsticks to handle raw and cooked food to avoid cross-contamination.

In addition, the public should not use charcoal as a cooking fuel in poorly ventilated areas, especially indoors, to avoid harmful exposure to carbon monoxide (CO) and prevent CO poisoning. While using other kinds of fuel, the public should also ensure adequate ventilation.

For more health information, the public may call the DH's Health Education Infoline (2833 0111) or visit the [CHP's website](#) and [Facebook Fanpage](#).

The public may also call Dial-a-Weather (1878 200) or visit the [website of the Hong Kong Observatory](#) for the latest weather information and forecast, or its [page on Weather Information for Senior Citizens](#).

Employers and employees should take precautions during cold weather

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Cold Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Cold Weather Warning is in force, they should take appropriate precautions such as reminding employees who have to work outdoors or in remote areas to wear appropriately

warm clothing, and make arrangements for employees to rotate from outdoor to indoor or sheltered work sites as far as possible. Employees should take note of the weather report, wear appropriately warm clothing and be mindful of their health conditions. They should notify their supervisors and seek medical help immediately if feeling unwell, such as having cold limbs and body shivering.

Regional flag day today

Three charities have been issued Public Subscription Permits to hold flag sales from 7am to 12.30pm today (January 28). They are, on Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong Blind Union; in Kowloon, Richmond Fellowship of Hong Kong; and in the New Territories, Pentecostal Church of Hong Kong, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) said.

Arrangements have been made with the charities to help people distinguish among the three flag-selling activities.

Information on the three flag-selling organisations on January 28 is as follows:

Region	Name of organisation	Colour of collection bag	Colour of flag
Hong Kong Island	Hong Kong Blind Union	Yellow	Blue
Kowloon	Richmond Fellowship of Hong Kong	Beige	Pink
New Territories	Pentecostal Church of Hong Kong	Yellow	Powder blue

Details of the charitable fund-raising activities, including any updated information, covered by the issued Public Subscription Permits have been published on the GovHK website (www.gov.hk/en/theme/fundraising/search). Permits for flag days containing information on contact methods of the flag-selling organisations and the approved flag-selling activities have also been uploaded to the SWD's website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_controlofc/sub_flagdays) for reference. For enquiries, please call the SWD's hotline at 2343 2255, or the designated hotline of the 1823 Call Centre at 3142 2678.

In the case of suspected fraudulent flag day activities, people should not make any donation and should immediately report the matter to the Police, the spokesman added.

[HKETO, Brussels supports Hong Kong comics industry at Angoulême International Comics Festival, France \(with photos\)](#)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) supported the Hong Kong comics industry's participation in the 50th Angoulême International Comics Festival, France, from January 26 to 29 (Angoulême time).

With the theme of "Fifteen Fantasies", the Hong Kong Arts Centre brought seven Hong Kong comics artists and 15 comics books created in Hong Kong to the Festival this year, where they met with readers and industry professionals from all over the world.

The HKETO, Brussels hosted a networking reception today (January 27, Angoulême time) for the Hong Kong comic artists, professionals and participants of the Festival. In her speech, Assistant Representative of the HKETO, Brussels Ms Carol Tsang said that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government supported the development of comics and animation, which had always been an important and well-loved element of Hong Kong's popular culture. The vibrant creative industry and an excellent system in protecting intellectual property had made Hong Kong an attractive place for talents and artists.

Founded in 1974, the Angoulême International Comics Festival is one of the best-known comics festivals in Europe.



Task Force on Promoting and Branding Hong Kong set up

The Government today (January 27) announced the setting up of the Task Force on Promoting and Branding Hong Kong to focus on devising narratives for the new situation, new potentials and new opportunities in Hong Kong under its new development stage. Through appropriately tapping the views of the market and stakeholders, as well as direct communication and public relations promotion, the Task Force aims to allow friends and stakeholders in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas regions to have a more comprehensive understanding of Hong Kong's advantages and opportunities so that the city's edges can be fully known, understood and recognised.

The Task Force, led by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, will advise the Government on the overall strategy of promoting Hong Kong's advantages, and a series of promotional plans and activities overseas and in the Mainland. With concerted efforts of Hong Kong Inc. partner organisations and members, the Task Force would tell good stories of Hong Kong to raise the city's international profile and enhance its branding and image so that all parties can better understand Hong Kong's advantages, potential and opportunities.

Mr Chan said, "After undergoing three years of the pandemic, our community has returned to normalcy rapidly, and now is the time for us to take the initiative to proactively promote Hong Kong. With the development in the past few years, Hong Kong has embraced many positive changes, and its positioning has become clearer. However, people outside Hong Kong may not be aware of the new opportunities brought by these changes, and some of them might still have negative perceptions of Hong Kong since they might not understand the city's situation. With the resumption of convenient cross-boundary movement, we must go all out to promote Hong Kong's new potentials and opportunities at full steam. Meanwhile, the Government is planning a series of events, one after another, with a view to enhancing promotion of Hong Kong in overseas regions and in the Mainland.

"The Task Force comprises prominent individuals with diverse background, as well as representatives of Hong Kong Inc. partner organisations. I am confident that with their valuable advice and support, the Government will be able to maximise the impact of its publicity efforts both in the Mainland and overseas, presenting more effectively to the world the vibrancy of our city and the unlimited opportunities we offer."

Membership of the Task Force is as follows:

Chairperson

The Financial Secretary

Official members

Deputy Financial Secretary
Deputy Secretary for Justice
Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Secretary for Health
Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry
Secretary for Transport and Logistics
Director-General of Investment Promotion
Director of Information Services

Non-official members

Mr Samir Assaf
Mr Peter Burnett
Mr Ronnie Chan
Professor Tony Chan Fan-cheong
Dr Sunny Chai Ngai-chiu
Dr Adrian Cheng Chi-kong
Ms Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting
Mr Victor Chu Lap-lik
Mr Frederik Gollob
Mr Johannes Hack
Dr Karl Kwok Chi-leung
Dr Peter Lam Kin-ngok
Mr Steve Leung Chi-tien
Mr Li Ruigang
Mr Eric Li
Mr David Liao
Ms Amy Lo Choi-wan
Ms Tammy Tam
Ms Winnie Tam Wan-chi
Dr Eden Woon Yi-teng
Mrs Betty Yuen So Siu-mai
Dr Allan Zeman

Hong Kong Inc. Partner Organisations

Airport Authority Hong Kong
Financial Services Development Council
Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited
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Hong Kong Productivity Council
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MTR Corporation Limited
University Grants Committee