

CHP reminds public on precautions against heat stroke during very hot weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (April 29) reminded members of the public, particularly those undertaking outdoor activities, to take heed of necessary measures against heat stroke and sunburn in very hot weather.

"The public should carry and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration while engaging in outdoor activities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Those engaged in strenuous outdoor activities should avoid beverages containing caffeine, such as coffee and tea, as well as alcohol, as they speed up water loss through the urinary system," the spokesman explained.

"Children, the elderly, the obese and those with chronic illnesses, such as heart disease or high blood pressure, are more vulnerable to heat stroke. They should pay special attention," the spokesman added.

The public should adopt the following precautions:

- Wear loose and light-coloured clothing to reduce heat absorption and facilitate sweat evaporation and heat dissipation;
- Avoid vigorous exercise and prolonged activities like hiking or trekking as heat, sweating and exhaustion can place additional demands on the physique;
- Perform outdoor activities in the morning or the late afternoon;
- For indoor activities, open all windows, use a fan or use air-conditioning to maintain good ventilation;
- Do not stay inside a parked vehicle; and
- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day. If working in a hot environment is inevitable, introduce shade in the workplace where practicable. Start work slowly and pick up the pace gradually. Move to a cool area for rest at regular intervals to allow the body to recuperate.

The public should also note the latest and the forecast Ultraviolet (UV) Index released by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO). When the UV Index is high (6 or above):

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and the eyes to sunlight;
- Wear long-sleeved and loose-fitting clothes;
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat or use an umbrella;

- Seek a shaded area or put on UV-blocking sunglasses;
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or above. Apply liberally and reapply after swimming, sweating or towelling off; and
- While using DEET-containing insect repellents for personal protection against mosquito-borne diseases, apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

If symptoms develop, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, shortness of breath or confusion, rest and seek help immediately, and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

The public may obtain more information from the DH's Health Education Infoline (2833 0111), [heat stroke](#) page and [UV radiation](#) page; the HKO's Dial-a-Weather (1878 200), latest [weather report and forecast](#), [UV Index](#) and weather information for [hiking and mountaineering](#); and [press releases](#) of the Labour Department on precautions against heat stroke for outdoor workers and their employers when the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force.

[Assess the risk of heat stroke to employees](#)

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

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

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Very Hot Weather Warning is in force, they should assess the risk of heat stroke to their employees and adopt effective preventive measures such as providing cool drinking water, setting up temporary sunshade, providing mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion of employees and providing for employees as far as practicable covered space with good ventilation for rest and meals. Employees should drink water regularly and be mindful of their physical condition. If early heat stroke symptoms such as headache and thirst appear, they should rest in a cool or shady place and drink water immediately. They should also inform their supervisors to take appropriate action.

Very Hot Weather Warning issued

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

The Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning.

To prevent heat stroke, avoid prolonged activities outdoors.

If engaged in outdoor work or activities, wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes. Stay in shaded areas as much as possible.

Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you feel sick, consult a doctor right away.

FEHD reminds operators of catering businesses to continue to comply with anti-epidemic regulations during long weekend

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (April 28) reminded operators of catering businesses that the Vaccine Pass requirement will enter the second stage from April 30 (Saturday). The relevant vaccination requirements are also applicable to the remaining period (i.e. April 30 to May 4) of the specified period of the prevailing directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (the Cap. 599F Regulation). Operators of catering businesses must stay vigilant during the coming long weekend and strictly comply with the requirements and directions under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation (Cap. 599L) and the Cap. 599F Regulation etc. Customers must also comply with the various anti-epidemic regulations and restrictions, including the requirements on vaccination, group gatherings and the wearing of masks, in order to help the epidemic situation continue to subside and prevent a rebound.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The FEHD will continue to step up its inspections and conduct joint operations with the Police, so as to take stringent enforcement action against operators, staff and customers of

catering businesses and certain scheduled premises who defy anti-epidemic regulations during the coming long weekend."

The spokesman reminded operators of catering businesses and the public that the second stage of the Vaccine Pass arrangements, except under exempted scenarios (e.g. for those issued with a COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Certificate (Medical Exemption Certificate), recovery record or for other specified scenarios), include the following requirements –

(a) persons aged 18 or above are required to receive at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccine to continue to use the Vaccine Pass;

(b) if persons aged 12 to 17 have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine for less than six months, their Vaccine Pass remains valid; however, if they have received their first dose for more than six months, they will need to receive a second dose to continue to use the Vaccine Pass.

In addition, catering businesses operators and members of the public must strictly comply with a series of requirements and restrictions. Among these, operators of catering businesses are required to use the "QR Code Verification Scanner" mobile app developed by the Government to scan the QR code of a customer's vaccination record or Medical Exemption Certificate or recovery record to ensure compliance with the active checking requirements. Operators must also ensure that the "QR Code Verification Scanner" mobile app is the latest version (4.3.0 or above), to avoid giving rise to unnecessary problems (e.g. an incorrect audio alert will be generated as the app cannot verify a recovery record QR code, and the person concerned would be mistaken as not meeting the Vaccine Pass requirement). Operators of catering business should update the "QR Code Verification Scanner" directly. It is not advisable to uninstall the current version, and download and install the latest version, so as to avoid deleting the existing scanning records inadvertently.

"QR Code Verification Scanner" can be used to scan the QR code of vaccination record or Medical Exemption Certificate or recovery record displayed on "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app. If a customer does not store his or her relevant record on "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app, but displays it through other means ("eHealth", "iAMSmart" mobile app or on paper), the operator may also scan that QR code with the "QR Code Verification Scanner" to check compliance with the Vaccine Pass requirement; however, that customer is still required to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code separately before being allowed to enter the premises.

The spokesman also reminded operators of catering business that they must provide specified form for use by exempted persons under the Vaccine Pass requirement and specified persons (e.g. people with a disability) under the "LeaveHomeSafe" requirement, and keep such record for 31 days. From May 1, all Medical Exemption Certificates must be issued electronically by doctors via the eHealth System or the Hospital Authority's computer system. Certificates without an encrypted QR code will not be accepted. The Government has uploaded the updated specified form applicable to May 1 or after onto the FEHD webpage.

On the other hand, the requirements of air change and/or air purifiers for catering premises have been implemented for one year. Catering premises which have yet to register via the designated FEHD webpage on compliance with a minimum of six air changes per hour or installation of air purifiers meeting the prescribed specifications are required, under the directions, to remain closed. They must first comply with the above requirements, complete such registration and obtain confirmation from the FEHD as valid before they are allowed to reopen their businesses.

Operators of catering business are also required to ensure that the ventilating system (outside air) approved under the licence is properly repaired and maintained so that the outside air supply consistently fulfils the approval requirements, and that the system, regardless of whether it meets the requirement of an air change per hour level of six, is fully switched on when the premises is open for business to ensure a proper supply of outside air. They must, after air purifiers have been installed at the premises, properly switch on, operate, maintain and repair the air purifiers in accordance with the manufacturer's manual when their premises are open for business.

During April, the FEHD and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer have made a series of publicity and education efforts, including holding online meetings with the representatives of the catering trade on April 19 and 27, and the FEHD has also, through advisory letters issued to operators of catering premises and liaison by frontline colleagues, reminded them to comply with the relevant requirements and directions. It is believed that the catering trade and the public should have get used to and adapted to the new arrangements.

If a person responsible for carrying on a catering business contravenes the Cap. 599F Regulation or the requirements and directions of the Vaccine Pass, he or she is liable to be prosecuted and, upon conviction, to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months. Persons who are present at catering premises or other specified premises must comply with directions applicable to them. Non-compliance with the relevant directions is an offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000. The liability may be discharged by paying a fixed penalty of \$5,000. In addition, for customers in breach of the requirement on the maximum number of persons per table within catering premises, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for violating the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G). For customers not wearing a mask when they are not eating or drinking at a table therein or they are not eating or drinking, they are liable to a fixed penalty of \$5,000 for contravening the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I).

To minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission, the spokesman strongly appealed to operators of catering business and members of the public to stay vigilant and comply with the relevant regulations on prevention and control of disease in a concerted and persistent manner during the long Easter holidays. The FEHD will continue to maintain communication with the sector and strengthen its publicity efforts and enforcement actions. They are reminded to exercise self-discipline and co-operate to fight the virus

together.

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 40 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 40 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220428.pdf.

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must go to any of the mobile specimen collection stations, community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions to undergo professional swab sampling in fulfilling the requirements for compulsory testing. Young children may continue to undergo the test using a stool specimen.

The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. The Government is working towards the goal of boosting the vaccination rates of children, teenagers and the elderly by the end of April so that they can be protected by the vaccines as early as possible. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP of the DH has updated the consensus interim recommendations, and persons aged 60 or above who have taken three doses of vaccine are recommended to receive an additional dose (i.e. fourth dose) of either Comirnaty vaccine or CoronaVac vaccine at least three months after their last dose. Members of the public who are eligible should get the fourth dose as early as possible for better protection.

CTCs provide testing services for the public. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en). The system shows the booking status of the centres for the coming two weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (April 28), there was around 97 per cent availability for booking places for the coming two weeks. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

The Government will set up a mobile specimen collection station at Beneville in Tuen Mun and re-open a mobile specimen collection station at Cheung Wang Estate in Tsing Yi tomorrow (April 29), and extend the service period of the mobile specimen collection stations at Chuk Yuen North Estate in Wong Tai Sin and Hung Fuk Estate in Hung Shui Kiu to April 30 (Saturday). Separately, ticketing machines have been installed in a number of service points for on-site ticket arrangement. Members of the public who have obtained a ticket can visit the CTC website (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to check the real-time queueing ticket status. Booking service is also provided for some large-scale mobile specimen collection stations, and members of the public may use the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to reserve a suitable time slot for testing.

Other than persons subject to compulsory testing, all members of the public may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The opening dates and

operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable)

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;

2. To attend any of the CTCs (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf), and the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs; or

4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times,

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);

2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."