

# Updates on report of suspected serious adverse event with history of COVID-19 vaccination

The Department of Health (DH) has put in place a pharmacovigilance system for COVID-19 immunisations, including receiving reports of Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFIs) related to the COVID-19 vaccines used in Hong Kong from healthcare professionals and pharmaceutical industries, and setting up the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation to provide independent assessment on the potential causal link between AEFIs and COVID-19 vaccination. The DH is also partnering with the University of Hong Kong to conduct an active surveillance programme for Adverse Events of Special Interest under the COVID-19 Vaccines Adverse Events Response and Evaluation Programme. The main purpose of the pharmacovigilance system is to detect potential signals of possible side effects of the vaccines.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an AEFI is any medical occurrence that follows immunisation and that does not necessarily have a causal relationship with the usage of the vaccine. The Expert Committee conducts causality assessments based on the WHO algorithm for suspected serious adverse events.

As of May 9, a total of 11 808 persons had been infected with COVID-19 and 210 had died of the disease in Hong Kong. Separately, about 1.74 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines had been administered for members of the public in Hong Kong. Around 1.07 million people had received at least one dose of a vaccine, accounting for 16.3 per cent of the population aged 16 or above. In the same period, the DH received about 2 660 reports of adverse events (0.15 per cent of total vaccine doses administered), including 19 death cases with vaccination within 14 days before they passed away (0.0011 per cent of total vaccine doses administered). The Expert Committee concluded that four cases had no causal relationship with COVID-19 vaccination and preliminarily considered that 12 cases were not associated with vaccination, while three cases were pending assessment. The Expert Committee considered there is no unusual pattern identified so far, and it will continue to closely monitor the situation and further collect more data for assessment. An updated report (as at May 16) will be uploaded on May 21.

According to information from the Hospital Authority (HA), during the period from April 5 to May 2, the daily average figure for inpatient discharges and deaths due to acute stroke was 47.3, and the number of deaths due to acute stroke averaged 3.9 per day. In addition, in the same period, the ratio of death cases out of those without a vaccination record was 53.1 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases for those with a vaccination record was 2.3 cases for every 100 000 people. The overall death rate is similar to that recorded in the past three years. Out of those without a vaccination record, the ratio of death cases with acute stroke or

acute myocardial infarction was 2.7 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases under the same category for those with a vaccination record was 0.4 cases for every 100 000 people. Based on the statistical analysis of the above figures, there is no evidence that vaccination increases the risk of death for recipients.

As of 4pm today (May 17), the DH had received one death case reported as a suspected serious adverse event with history of COVID-19 vaccination within 14 days from the HA in the past 24 hours (please refer to the Annex). According to the report, the provisional cause of death was brainstem haemorrhage. The initial clinical assessment considered the event was not related to vaccination and the HA had referred the case to the Coroner. So far, there is no clinical evidence indicating that the event was caused by the vaccine. The DH will pass the case based on the established mechanism to the Expert Committee for conducting causality assessment.

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## **Missing man in Kwun Tong located**

A man who went missing in Kwun Tong has been located.

Kwan Chi-wai, aged 62, went missing after he left his residence on Yuet Wah Street on May 15 morning. His family made a report to Police on the next day (May 16).

The man was located in a construction site on Hiu Kwong Street in Kwun Tong this afternoon (May 17). He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

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## **Government tightens boarding and quarantine requirements for persons arriving from certain overseas places**

The Government announced today (May 17) that the boarding and quarantine requirements for persons arriving from certain overseas places will be tightened.

In view of the persistent unstable epidemic situation in various overseas places, as well as the prevalent transmission and outbreaks of cases

involving the more transmissible and potentially more serious mutant virus strains, upon closely monitoring the epidemic developments in the relevant places and the case importation risks they may pose to Hong Kong, the Government will specify Argentina, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, the Netherlands and Singapore as high-risk Group B specified places with effect from May 21.

All persons who have stayed in the relevant places on the day of boarding or during the 14 days before that day, will have to present at boarding a negative result proof of a nucleic acid test for COVID-19 conducted within 72 hours before the scheduled time of departure of the aircraft, as well as the confirmation of a room reservation in a designated quarantine hotel in Hong Kong. On arrival at Hong Kong, they will be subject to the "test-and-hold" arrangement at the airport, and on confirmation of negative test results, they will then be required to board the designated transport arranged by the Government to proceed to the designated quarantine hotels for compulsory quarantine. In accordance with the requirements applicable to Group B and Group C specified places, non-Hong Kong residents who have stayed in the above mentioned places will be denied entry into Hong Kong.

Persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in the relevant places and who are yet to be fully vaccinated will be subject to a 21-day compulsory quarantine at designated quarantine hotels, with four tests to be conducted during the period. Persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in the relevant places and who have been fully vaccinated will be subject to a 14-day compulsory quarantine at designated quarantine hotels, with three tests to be conducted during the period, followed by a seven-day self-monitoring period as well as compulsory testing on the 16th and 19th day of arrival at Hong Kong.

The Government will gazette the relevant updated specifications under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to effect the above measures on May 21.

A Government spokesman said, "The Government will continue to closely monitor the epidemic situation of various places, the prevalence of new virus variants, vaccination progress, and changes in the volume of cross-boundary passenger traffic, and will adjust the boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements for persons arriving at Hong Kong from relevant places as the situation warrants."

Details on the grouping of specified places and their respective boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements can be found at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/high-risk-places.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/high-risk-places.html).

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## [SHA expresses deep sorrow over passing of Mr Yau Sing-po](#)

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui, today (May 17) expressed his deep sorrow over the passing of Mr Yau Sing-po.

"Mr Yau was a renowned Cantonese opera artist who had actively participated in performances. He had made substantial and lifelong contributions to the promotion, preservation and development of Cantonese opera. He received an Honorary Fellowship of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in 2016 and a Bronze Bauhinia Star in 2017. His passing is our loss and he will be remembered fondly. I offer my deepest condolences to Mr Yau's family," Mr Tsui said.

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## [HK innovations win acclaim at International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (May 17) officiated at the CE's Reception for Awardees of International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva 2021 to commend Hong Kong research and development (R&D) talents for their inventions winning worldwide acclaim.

Among over 350 exhibitors this year, the Hong Kong delegation won 14 Gold Medals with Congratulations of the Jury, 47 Gold Medals, 61 Silver Medals and 14 Bronze Medals, totalling a record high of 136 awards (see Annex).

Speaking at the reception, Mrs Lam said that the Hong Kong delegation comprised teams from universities, secondary schools, R&D centres, start-ups and government departments, reflecting a fervent innovation and technology (I&T) atmosphere in Hong Kong with flourishing I&T developments in the government, industry, academic and research sectors that exemplify Hong Kong's strong innovation and R&D capabilities.

She said that, for the first time, the National 14th Five-Year Plan clearly states the support for Hong Kong to develop into an international I&T hub and has included the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Loop as one of the four major platforms of co-operation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. This demonstrates the great importance the Central Government attaches to and its support for Hong Kong's I&T, and there will be much more room for further development.

In addition, the Government has been promoting R&D through various measures, including the establishment of the InnoHK research clusters at Hong Kong Science Park, the introduction of the Global STEM Professorship Scheme and the development at full speed of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park located in the Lok Ma Chau Loop.

The International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva is the largest global exhibition devoted exclusively to inventions. All the exhibited inventions have been evaluated by an international jury of specialists. The event was held online for the first time this year, showcasing about 600 inventions from 24 countries and regions. Details are available at its website ([inventions-geneva.ch/en/home](https://inventions-geneva.ch/en/home)).

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit; the Permanent Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Ms Annie Choi; and the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology, Ms Rebecca Pun, also attended the event today.