

Perform hand hygiene to help combat infectious diseases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is calling for the public to pay attention to hand hygiene in support of the annual Hand Hygiene Day tomorrow (May 5). The CHP reminds the public to cover their coughing and sneezes, then perform hand hygiene, emphasising that good cough manners and maintaining clean hands are helpful in preventing infectious diseases.

The slogan of this year's Hand Hygiene Day is "Cover your cough and sneeze then clean your hands please", which is simple and easy to understand. Starting from an early age, young children can be taught proper cough manners, while adults and elders can serve as good role models. Together, Hong Kong people can be considerate and responsible citizens.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "One can either cover their cough or sneeze with a mask, tissue, blouse or upper sleeve. Good hand hygiene is the primary measure proven to be effective in preventing infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Hong Kong is still fighting against COVID-19. Everyone has a role to play in order to pull through this difficult time."

The spokesman added, "Members of the public are advised to clean hands with liquid soap and water when they are visibly soiled or likely contaminated with blood and body fluid. Proper hand hygiene technique should follow the CHP's seven hand cleaning steps to wash or rub hands for 20 seconds. The seven steps are washing palms, back of hands, finger webs, back of fingers, thumbs, finger tips and wrists. When hands are not visibly soiled, they could be cleaned with 70-80 per cent alcohol-based hand rub.

The public may visit the CHP's Hand Hygiene Day 2021 webpage (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/104150.html) for more information on this important matter.

Red flags hoisted at some beaches

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (May 4) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Shek O Beach and Big

Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island; and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Government to gazette compulsory testing notice

The Government will exercise the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publish in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 46 specified premises during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

Currently, in all districts in Hong Kong, if one or more new confirmed cases are found in the residential buildings (including buildings for both commercial and residential uses), or there are sewage samples tested positive, or there are other factors which implied possible infection risks, the buildings will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

In view of the positive imported case with the preliminary test result involving N501Y mutant strain recorded today (May 3) and the result of sewage sample tests, two premises fulfilling the above criteria are included in the compulsory testing notice. In addition, upon further investigation by the Centre for Health Protection, an earlier confirmed case with unknown sources of infection involving N501Y mutation strain had been present at two specified premises. Relevant persons are also required to undergo compulsory testing.

In addition, since there were outbreaks of upper respiratory tract infection and/or influenza-like illness in 42 schools, and the symptoms of the concerned diseases are similar to those of COVID-19, for prudence's sake, the 42 schools are also covered in the compulsory testing notice.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are at Annex 1. Persons who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notices.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau reminded the public that in accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier, all household members of close contacts are required to undergo compulsory testing. Any person who had lived with a person placed under quarantine pursuant to section 22 of the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) (person under quarantine) in the same residential unit on the date of commencement of quarantine or during the 14 days before that day, and who

becomes aware of the quarantine of the person under quarantine when the relevant quarantine has not yet been completed, has to undergo testing within two days of him or her becoming aware that the person under quarantine has been placed under quarantine and report to the Government the result of the test by phone (at 6275 6901), fax (at 2530 5872) or email (ct@csb.gov.hk) within three days of undergoing the test.

The spokesman thanked the general public for their co-operation in undergoing compulsory testing for fighting the virus together.

Specimens were collected for over 115 000 persons (including more than 70 000 foreign domestic helpers (FDHs)) yesterday (May 2) at 21 community testing centres (CTCs) and 36 mobile specimen collection stations, making it a record high for daily specimen collection at CTCs/mobile specimen collection stations in Hong Kong. The Government also set up an additional mobile specimen collection station at Sai Ying Pun Community Complex today to enhance service.

For FDHs who have yet to receive testing, they can still make use of the service provided at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations in the coming six days. Currently, there are a total of 21 CTCs providing testing service for the public, including free service for persons subject to compulsory testing. The number of tests available for appointments at CTCs has been increased to over 38 000 per day, and additional manpower has been deployed to serve the public. As of 6pm today, there are close to 14 000 booking places available for the next six days (May 4 to 9) at the 21 CTCs. 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). Booking status of centres for the coming week will be shown for public's selection of suitable testing centre and time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. 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 reminds FDHs who have made bookings to visit their selected centre at the booked time slot for testing, and those who have yet to receive testing to book online book to utilise the remaining quotas.

The Government will add one more mobile specimen collection station for persons subject to compulsory testing (including FDHs) at Hing Wah (II) Estate in Chai Wan tomorrow (May 4), and extend the service period of the station at Fu Tung Estate in Tung Chung to May 5. Coupled with the 21 CTCs, there will be a total of 48 CTCs/mobile specimen collection stations in various districts tomorrow to provide free service for persons subject to compulsory testing (including FDHs), the testing capacity should be sufficient to meet the demand. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations in various districts providing free COVID-19 nucleic acid testing services for the general public are stated in Annex 2.

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

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 community testing centres (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);
3. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from any of the 121 post offices, vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations or 47 designated general outpatient 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);
4. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority;
5. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the Department of Health (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); or
6. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

The spokesman cautioned that testing received at Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority or during hospital stays, 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 community testing centres."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notification containing the result of the test for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Furthermore, persons subject to testing under the compulsory testing notices should, as far as reasonably practicable, take appropriate personal disease prevention measures including wearing a mask and maintaining hand hygiene, and, unless for the purpose of undergoing the specified test, stay at their place of residence and avoid going out until the test result is ascertained as far as possible.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm. If persons subject to compulsory testing plan to conduct testing at any of the community testing centres, they can check the centre's appointment status in advance. The hotlines of the community testing centres are available at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had

been to the 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 may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Relevant officers of different government departments are empowered to perform certain functions under the relevant Regulations under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), including requesting individuals to provide information and assistance when necessary. Any person who fails to comply with the relevant request commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). Collection and use of any personal data for conducting COVID-19 tests must meet the requirements under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). Government departments or testing service providers which handle the relevant information may provide the data to the DH or other relevant departments for anti-epidemic purposes as necessary. The workflow does not involve the provision of any personal data to organisations or persons outside Hong Kong.

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 contacted confirmed cases), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

CHP appeals to public again for heightened vigilance against upper respiratory tract infection and influenza-like illness

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (May 3) reminded and strongly urged the public again to enhance their vigilance against upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) and influenza-like illness (ILI) due to continued rise in URTI and ILI outbreaks at schools recorded recently.

The CHP received reports of URTI and ILI outbreaks in 99 schools recently (April 18 to May 3), including 72 kindergartens/child care centres and 27 primary schools, involving over 650 persons. Of them, reports of outbreaks in 42 schools, including 30 kindergartens/child care centres and 12 primary schools, are newly received today.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP has already adopted the most stringent precautionary measures that schools will be required to suspend class immediately for five days if there is a URTI and/or ILI outbreak in the school. All staff and students of the school concerned will also be issued with a compulsory testing order for testing of COVID-19 so as to identify the infected persons as early as possible and minimise the risk of transmission in schools and the community."

The spokesman explained that symptoms of URTI, ILI and other respiratory infections, including influenza and COVID-19, could be similar. It could be difficult to differentiate them clinically. Therefore, testing of COVID-19 at an earlier stage to facilitate earlier case detection is crucial in coping with the COVID-19 epidemic.

Young children, the elderly and patients with chronic diseases are prone to respiratory tract infection and its complications. As schools are collective assembly places, infectious diseases could easily spread among people through their daily contacts. In view of this, the CHP has recently issued letters to schools and doctors to appeal for heightened vigilance and appropriate actions. To prevent outbreaks of respiratory tract infections including COVID-19, it is of prime importance that children with fever, regardless of the presence of respiratory symptom, should not be allowed to attend school. They should wear a mask and consult doctors promptly. Schools should check the body temperature of all students every day when they arrive at school so as to identify students with fever. Moreover, staff should also check their temperature before work every day. Students and staff with fever or respiratory illnesses should not go to school and seek medical attention immediately. Doctors are also urged to remain vigilant and arrange testing for respiratory infections for all patients presenting with acute respiratory symptoms.

Meanwhile, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against influenza, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses:

- Receive a seasonal influenza vaccination for personal protection;
- 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 nose and mouth 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 class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

Members of the public, particularly children, the elderly and those with chronic diseases, should wear a face mask and consult a doctor promptly if they develop symptoms of respiratory tract infection.

Information on seasonal influenza vaccination can be found at the website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/100632.html). The Government has also launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, eligible persons can learn more about the programme at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).

[COVID-19 Vaccination Programme statistics](#)

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has been implemented for the 67th day since February 26, 2021.

So far, about 1 529 500 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered for members of the public (please see Annex 1). Among them, about 971 900 persons have received their first dose, with about 445 800 persons receiving the Sinovac vaccine and about 526 100 persons receiving the BioNTech vaccine. About 557 600 persons have received their second dose, with about 322 600 persons receiving the Sinovac vaccine and about 235 000 persons receiving the BioNTech vaccine.

In the last 24 hours ending at 8pm today (May 3), about 37 600 persons have received vaccination and about 21 600 new vaccination bookings have been made online, detailed as follows:

(i) About 7 000 persons received their first dose of the Sinovac vaccine, including about 3 200 persons vaccinated at Community Vaccination Centres (CVCs) and about 3 800 persons at private doctors and clinics participating in the programme;

(ii) about 2 500 persons received their second dose of the Sinovac vaccine, including about 2 000 persons vaccinated at CVCs and about 600 persons at private doctors and clinics;

(iii) about 12 700 persons received their first dose of the BioNTech vaccine at CVCs, and about 15 300 persons received their second dose of the BioNTech vaccine;

(iv) the overall percentage of people who have received the Sinovac vaccine at CVCs is about 94 per cent; while the overall percentage of people who have received the BioNTech vaccine at CVCs is about 97 per cent; and

(v) about 4 300 persons have made online bookings for receiving their first and second doses of the Sinovac vaccine, while about 17 300 persons have made online bookings for receiving their first and second doses of the BioNTech vaccine.

In the last 24 hours ending at 0.00am today, there were six cases of ambulance transfers to hospitals. Among them, five persons were discharged and one person was admitted for observation (please see Annex 2).

As background information, in the last 24 hours ending at 0.00am today, there were 35 cases of stroke or myocardial infarction that required admission to the Intensive Care Unit, Acute Stroke Unit and Cardiac Care Unit of public hospitals. The state of new cases admitted to the wards concerned is provided as a cross reference to enhance fuller public understanding of cases of the kind recorded on vaccine recipients.