

# Tuberculosis rate in Hong Kong educational institutions shows decreasing trend in second half of 2024

â€‹The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced today (February 28) the situation of tuberculosis (TB) notifications in educational institutions in the second half of 2024, and reminded members of the public and school management to maintain personal and environmental hygiene at all times to prevent TB infections.

â€‹The DH received 1 620 notifications (provisional figure) of TB cases from July to December 2024, among which 44 cases involved patients aged 3 to 24 (i.e. normal school age), accounting for 2.72 per cent of the total notified cases in the same period. The corresponding proportion of TB cases for this age group showed a decreasing trend compared with the second half of 2022 (4.12 per cent) and that of 2023 (2.95 per cent). The DH will continue to monitor the situation. There were three cases studying at the same tertiary institution in second half of 2024. The information on TB cases in Hong Kong educational institutions has been uploaded to the [Tuberculosis and Chest Service \(TB&CS\) statistics webpage](#). The CHP has provided [guidelines](#) on the prevention and management of TB for the school's reference.

â€‹"According to the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), TB is one of the statutorily notifiable infectious diseases. Early identification of TB cases and prompt initiation of anti-TB treatment remain the mainstay of control. With the publicity and education efforts of the DH and the increased public awareness of hygiene, the TB notification rate in Hong Kong has shown a steady and significant decrease over the past decades. However, TB remains a relatively common disease in Hong Kong. About 43 TB cases (provisional figure) per 100 000 members of the population were newly diagnosed in 2024, while about 2.2 persons (provisional figure) died of TB. The DH is committed to promoting awareness of TB and its prevention in schools, the community and the healthcare sector to facilitate early identification and diagnosis and curb the transmission link at its source," the Consultant of Public Health Services Branch of the DH, Dr Tai Lai-bun, said.

â€‹TB is an airborne disease. When a TB patient coughs or sneezes, small droplets containing the tubercle bacilli are generated and spread in the air. If another person breathes in these small airborne droplets, he or she may be infected with the germ. However, in general, only prolonged contact with a patient increases the risk of infection.

â€‹"Upon notification, the CHP will conduct contact investigation for the close contacts of each case and take appropriate follow-up actions," Dr Tai said.

â€‹She added that people with symptoms of TB, such as persistent cough, blood in sputum, weight loss, fever and night sweating, should seek prompt medical advice. Patients with TB should strengthen respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette and receive TB treatment under supervision.

â€‹Members of the public may also visit the [TB&CS website](#) for more information about TB&CS, TB-related information and figures.