

Health Advice for Visitors to Hong Kong

Preventing Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)



Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) is a respiratory tract infection which is spread by respiratory droplets and caused by a coronavirus. While the World Health Organization has removed Hong Kong from its list of areas with recent local transmission, Hong Kong remains vigilant and puts in place stringent measures to protect public health. These measures serve to enable visitors to have an enjoyable and healthy stay in Hong Kong. To safeguard your health and the health of others, please pay attention to the following health guidelines formulated by the Department of Health.

The following people are advised not to travel:

1. People who feel unwell, especially people who have a fever; or
2. People who have been in close contact with suspected or confirmed SARS patients during the last 10 days. (Close contact means having cared for, having lived with, or having had contact with the respiratory secretions or bodily fluids of an infected person.)

Before the Trip

Find out the Dos and Don'ts

- Study the guidelines [Health Advice for Visitors to Hong Kong] before the trip.

Bring a Thermometer

- Bring a thermometer for daily body temperature checking if you are coming from an area with recent local transmission of SARS.

Travel Insurance

- Travellers are advised to purchase suitable travel insurance to cover emergency medical expenses.

During the Trip

Health Checks at Border Points

- Cooperate with port health authorities and follow instructions given by the tour leader/ tour guide. Comply with all necessary immigration procedures and health checks, including completion of health declaration forms and compliance with body temperature checking.

Body Temperature Checking

- Check body temperature daily throughout the trip if you come from an area with recent local transmission of SARS.

No Littering or Spitting

- Put rubbish in a rubbish bin. Use a tissue paper to hold your spit and discard it into a bin with a lid.
- Littering or spitting in public is an offence and the offender is liable to a fixed penalty of HK\$1,500.

Wash Hands Frequently

- Keep hands clean at all times. Wash hands with liquid soap after going to the toilet or touching public installations or equipment, and before meals or handling food. Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth. If necessary, wash hands before touching them. If hand washing facilities are not available, clean hands with a disinfectant containing 65 – 95% alcohol.

Have Tissue Paper and Masks Handy

- Have tissue paper handy. Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper or a handkerchief when sneezing or coughing.

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- Have masks handy and put one on when you or fellow travellers develop symptoms of respiratory tract infection.

No Sharing of Personal Items

- To prevent spread of infection, do not share towels or personal items.

Serving Utensils

- Use serving chopsticks and spoons at meal times. Do not share lunch boxes or drinks.

A Healthy Lifestyle

- Maintain healthy lifestyle practices throughout the trip. Observe good personal hygiene and do not smoke.

If Feeling Unwell

Consult a Doctor Promptly

- If feeling unwell, especially if you have a fever,
 - Inform hotel staff and the tour leader/tour guide;
 - You and your carers should put on a mask immediately;
 - Arrange for medical consultation at once;
 - Rest in the hotel room and postpone your trip until you have fully recovered.

Fellow Travellers

- Fellow travellers should avoid unnecessary contact with the sick group member, follow medical advice and pay meticulous attention to personal hygiene.

- If the sick member is confirmed or suspected to have SARS, fellow travellers should comply with the instructions given by the Department of Health on arrangements for the rest of the trip and any necessary quarantine measures.

After the Trip

Watch out for Symptoms

- If you develop symptoms of an infection such as fever and diarrhoea within 14 days after the trip, consult a doctor promptly and provide details of your recent travel to facilitate accurate diagnosis.

Health Information for Travellers

- Travellers seeking health information may call the Department of Health's Travel Health Centre at 2961 8840 or 2150 7235, or visit the Department of Health's Hong Kong Traveller's Health Service website at <http://www.info.gov.hk/trhealth>.
- For information on SARS, please call the Department of Health's SARS hotline at 187 2222 or visit the Department's website at <http://www.dh.gov.hk>.

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