Guidance Note on Monitoring of Body Temperature

When there is community spread of infectious diseases, routine monitoring of body temperature can aid early detection and segregation of persons with fever and respiratory symptoms, which is an effective public health measure to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Use of infrared cutaneous thermometer

Cutaneous infrared thermometer is often employed for temperature screening because of its convenience. A study* reported in 2008 that this infrared thermometer does not provide a reliable temperature readings. Therefore, it is prudent to have a second means (e.g. tympanic temperature measurement) for those with a high first reading by infrared thermometer.

Persons with fever and respiratory symptoms should

(a) refrain from work or school, and minimize social contact;
(b) wear masks, be vigilant to hand hygiene and respiratory manners;
(c) seek medical advice as soon as possible.

Special Attention during Serious or Emergency Response Level

1. **Schools**
   
   Since schools are places where people congregate, daily temperature check before attending school should be considered. Depending on situations, schools have the discretion to initiate the measure at an earlier stage.

2. **Offices and other institutions**
   
   The same principles for temperature monitoring in schools apply.

3. **Hospitals**
   
   (a) Patients (administered by hospital staff): At least daily temperature check for inpatients and report of clustering phenomenon to hospital infection control team.

   (b) Staff (including contract out staff): staff should conduct daily body temperature check. Mandatory record is not required. Supervisors and the hospital infection control team should monitor the number of sick staff and alert to unusual clustering.

Infection Control Branch, Centre for Health Protection
(e) Visitors: General publics will be advised to take temperature check by themselves. They should not visit hospital if they have fever.

Centre for Health Protection
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Annex

**Upper limit of normal body temperature by different measuring method**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measuring method</th>
<th>Celsius scale (°C)</th>
<th>Fahrenheit scale (°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>99.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tympanic</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectal</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armpit</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>99.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reference**