

Guidance note on monitoring of body temperature for prevention of human swine influenza

When there is community spread of human swine influenza, 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 human swine influenza.

Schools

Since schools are places where people congregate, daily temperature check before attending school should be considered during Serious Response Level, and it is recommended if a case of human swine influenza is confirmed locally or during Emergency Response Level. Depending on situations, schools have the discretion to initiate the measure at an earlier stage.

Offices and other institutions

The same principles for temperature monitoring in schools apply.

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.
- (c) **Visitors:** General publics will be advised to take temperature check by themselves. They should not visit hospital if they have fever.

Use of infrared cutaneous thermometer

Because of its convenience, cutaneous infrared thermometer is often employed for temperature screening. A study reported in 2008 that this thermometer may produce falsely high 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.

Annex: Upper limit of normal body temperature by different measuring method.

Measuring method	Celsius scale (°C)	Fahrenheit scale (°F)
Oral	37.5	99.5
Tympanic	38	100.4
Rectal	38	100.4
Armpit	37.3	99.1