

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (50) in DH SEB CD/8/16/1/2 III

30 June 2015

Dear Medical Superintendent,

A case of Japanese encephalitis

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health writes to alert you to a suspected local case of Japanese encephalitis (JE) recorded on 30 June 2015. The patient is a 68-year-old man living in Kwai Tsing. He had onset of neck pain on 21 June 2015 and fever and poor appetite on 23 June 2015. He was found to be confused at a dental clinic on 24 June, taken to the Ha Kwai Chung General Out-patient Clinic and was subsequently admitted to the Princess Margaret Hospital. The cerebrospinal fluid taken on 24 June was positive for JE IgM EIA and serum was positive for JE IgM on 26 June. The patient is currently intubated in intensive care unit and is in critical condition. The patient travelled to Mainland China from 11 to 12 June 2015. However, this could not rule out that the JE is locally acquired.

Japanese encephalitis is a viral disease transmitted by the bite of infective mosquitoes. The principal type of mosquito that transmits the disease is called *Culex tritaeniorhynchus* which breeds in water-logged fields, surface drainage channels, ponds, disused large water containers and sand pits. The mosquitoes become infected by feeding on pigs and wild birds infected with JE virus. Besides being widely distributed in rural areas, the vectors have also been found in urban areas in Hong Kong. The disease is not directly transmitted from person to person.

The incubation period of JE is usually 4 to 14 days. The disease may begin with non-specific prodromal symptoms lasting several days, followed by acute onset of high fever, severe headache, vomiting, photophobia, drowsiness, meningism and convulsion. Many infections are asymptomatic, but the case-fatality rate among those with encephalitis can be as high as 30%. Permanent neurologic or psychiatric sequelae can occur in 30%–50% of those with encephalitis. To prevent contracting the disease, one should take general measures to prevent mosquito bites. For more information on JE, please visit our website at <http://www.chp.gov.hk>.



If you encounter patients with signs and symptoms suggestive of JE, please inform the Central Notification Office (CENO) of the CHP (Telephone: 2477 2772, Fax: 2477 2770) or CENO On-line at <http://www.chp.gov.hk/ceno>.

Thank you for your unfailing support in prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Liza TO', written in a cursive style.

(Dr. Liza TO)
for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health