

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (189) in DH SEB CD/8/16/1/2 Pt.3

4 August 2016

Dear Medical Superintendent,

Detection of Japanese Encephalitis Virus in Mosquito

We would like to inform you that a sample of mosquitoes containing *Culex quinquefasciatus*, which was collected by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) on 23 June 2016, was tested positive for Japanese encephalitis (JE) virus by real-time PCR by the University of Hong Kong. This sample was trapped in the vicinity of Tung Fung Au (東風坳) at Ta Kwu Ling (打鼓嶺). According to information from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, there are three pig farms located within 2 km from the location. There was no confirmed human JE case recorded in this area in the past year.

JE is a viral disease transmitted by the bite of infective mosquitoes. The principal vector 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. Besides being widely distributed in rural areas, this principal vector has also been found in urban areas in Hong Kong. *Culex quinquefasciatus* is one of the potential vectors for JE and it breeds in large number in practically all types of water collections from rainwater holding artificial containers to polluted river. The mosquitoes become infected by feeding on pigs and wild birds infected with JE virus. The disease is not directly transmitted from person to person.

The incubation period of JE usually ranges from 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%. Of those who survive, 20%–30% suffer permanent intellectual, behavioural or neurological problems such as paralysis, recurrent seizures or inability to speak. 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/en/content/9/24/28.html>.

In response to the detection of JE-positive *Culex* mosquito, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will step up anti-mosquito measures in the concerned area. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) will conduct active surveillance among residents in the area. A CHP hotline (2125 1133) will be set up starting from 5 August 2016 from 9am till 6pm. Persons who have been to the vicinity of Tung Fung Au and had JE symptoms after 23 Apr 2016 are advised to call our hotline. If you encounter patients with signs and symptoms suggestive of JE, please report to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP via fax (2477 2770), phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line (https://cdis.chp.gov.hk/CDIS_CENO_ONLINE/ceno.html).

Please draw the attention of the healthcare professionals and supporting staff in your institution/ working with you to the above. Thank you for your continuous support in combating infectious diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. Liza TO)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health