

## **Guidelines on Prevention of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome for the General Public**

The Department of Health advises the general public to take the following precautionary measures to minimise the risk of contracting and spreading Middle East Respiratory Syndrome.

### **Disease information**

<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/24/26528.html>

### **Health advices for the general public**

- Maintain good personal hygiene
  - Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose.
  - Keep hands clean at all times. Wash hands frequently, especially before touching your eyes, mouth or nose, before handling food or eating, after going to toilet, after touching public installations such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels or door knobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing.
  - Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel or hand dryer.
  - If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, hand hygiene with 70 to 80% alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative.
  - Cover your nose and mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Do not spit or litter. Use tissue paper to hold your spit. Dispose of the soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, and then wash hands thoroughly.
  - If you have fever and/or respiratory symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, sore throat or muscle pain, put on a surgical mask and seek medical attention promptly.
  - Avoid going to crowded places with poor ventilation if you are feeling unwell.
  
- Maintain good environmental hygiene
  - Maintain good indoor ventilation.
  - Home should be cleaned thoroughly at least once per week with 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 10 ml of bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 990 ml of water) for non-metallic surface, wait until dry and then rinse with water. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol.
  - If places are contaminated by respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, use strong absorbent disposable towels to clean up the visible matter. Then

disinfect the surface and the neighbouring area with appropriate disinfectant. For non-metallic surface, disinfect with 1 in 49 diluted household bleach (mixture of 10ml of household bleach containing 5.25% hypochlorite solution with 490ml of water), leave for 15 - 30 minutes, and then rinse with water. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol. U-trap should be prevented from drying up and drain outlets should be disinfected regularly about once a week.

- Arrange immediate inspection and repair by qualified technicians if there is defect in the U-trap or foul odour coming out from drain outlets.
  
- Maintain healthy lifestyle
  - Build up good body resistance and maintain healthy lifestyle. This can be achieved through balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate rest.
  - Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption.

**For more information**

- Please visit the Centre for Health Protection thematic website at <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/26511.html>

Centre for Health Protection

March 2018

(Last updated on 20 August 2019)