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THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CENTRE FOR HEALTH PROTECTION COMMUNITY LIAISON DIVISION 4/F, 147C Argyle Street, Kowloon.

本署檔號Our Ref.: (56) in DH CL/1-60/24 Pt.II

來函檔號Your Ref.:

電 話Tel.: (852) 2125 2052 圖文傳真Fax: (852) 2601 4209

9 June 2015

Dear Chairman of Healthy Cities Project,

#### Activation of the Serious Response Level under the Government's Preparedness Plan on Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)

Further to our letter dated 3 June 2015, we are writing to inform you that the Government has activated the "Serious" Response Level under the Government's Preparedness Plan for the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) on 8 June 2015.

The Department of Health (DH) advises the public to avoid unnecessary travel to Korea, in particular, those with chronic illnesses. Travellers in Korea and the Middle-East should avoid unnecessary visit to healthcare facilities. Travellers in the Middle-East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels, and avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry.

Enclosed please find copies of health education pamphlets and posters on "Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)" for distribution to members of Healthy Cities Project and the public. If you would like to obtain more copies of the materials, please contact Mr Karic HO at 2125 2075.

Please visit the Centre for Health Protection's MERS webpage (<a href="http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view\_content/26511.html">http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view\_content/26511.html</a>) for updated information, including:

- disease situation,
- travel health advice,
- guidelines on the prevention of MERS, and
- online version of the education resources.

More information on MERS is also available at:

- The CHP Facebook Page (www.fb.com/CentreforHealthProtection);
- The CHP YouTube Channel (www.youtube.com/c/ChpGovHkChannel)
- Travel Health Service of DH (www.travelhealth.gov.hk)

We build a healthy Hong Kong and aspire to be an internationally renowned public health authority

We would like to solicit your assistance in disseminating the message to members of Healthy Cities Project and work associates, to update them of the situation and preventive measures.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

(Dr Emily LEUNG) for Director of Health

Encl.:

Posters and pamphlets of "Middle East Respiratory Syndrome"



## Middle East Respiratory Syndrome



#### Causative agent

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which include viruses that may cause mild illness like common cold as well as severe illness like severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in humans. There are 3 main subgroups of coronaviruses: alpha ( $\alpha$ ), beta ( $\beta$ ) and gamma ( $\Upsilon$ ). Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) is a beta coronavirus which has not been identified in humans before and is different from any coronaviruses (including SARS-coronavirus) that have been found in humans or animals.

#### Clinical features

Infected persons may present with acute serious respiratory illness with symptoms including fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. Most patients developed pneumonia. Many also had gastrointestinal symptoms or kidney failure. In people with immune deficiencies, the disease may have atypical presentation such as diarrhoea.

#### Mode of transmission

There is still uncertainty at the moment. People may be infected upon exposure to animals (such as camel), environment or other confirmed patients, such as in a hospital setting. Coronaviruses are typically spread like other respiratory infections such as influenza. Besides, studies supported that camel served as the primary source of MERS-CoV.

#### Management

There is currently no specific treatment for the disease. Treatment is supportive.

#### Prevention

Wear surgical mask and seek medical advice promptly if respiratory symptoms develop.

#### Personal hygiene

- Keep hands clean
- Wash hands before touching the eyes, nose and mouth
- Cover nose and mouth with tissue paper while sneezing or coughing and dispose of soiled tissue paper in a lidded rubbish bin
- Build up good body immunity by having a balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption



#### Environmental hygiene

Though coronaviruses may survive for some time in the environment, they are easily destroyed by most detergents and cleaning agents. It is important to:

- Keep our home clean
- Avoid visiting crowded places with poor ventilation
- Maintain good ventilation

#### Travel health advice



- Avoid going to farms, barns and markets with camels
- Avoid contact with animals, especially camels (including riding camels or participating in any activity involving contact with camels), birds, poultry or sick people during travel
- Wash hands regularly before and after touching animals in case of visits to farms, barns or markets with camels
- Avoid close contact with sick people, especially with those suffering from acute respiratory infections, and avoid visit to healthcare settings with MERS patients
- Travellers should also adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as do not consume raw or undercooked animal products, including milk and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled
- If feeling unwell, put on a surgical mask, seek medical attention immediately and inform doctor of recent travel history

Centre for Health Protection Website www.chp.gov.hk

24-Hour Health Education Hotline of the Department of Health 2833 0111



# 預防中東呼吸統合症

## **Guard against**

## Middle East Respiratory Syndrome

## 傳播途徑

● 可能透過接觸動物(例如駱駝)、環境或確診病人 (例如在醫院內) 而受感染;傳播途徑跟其他呼 吸道感染(例如流感)相似

#### 病徵

- 可出現發燒、咳嗽、呼吸急促和困難
- 多數患者患有肺炎;還有腸胃方面的症狀,包括 腹瀉、或出現腎臟衰竭
- 免疫力較弱的患者,可能有其他病徵

## **Transmission**

 People may be infected upon exposure to animals (such as camel), environment or other confirmed patients (such as in a hospital setting); mode of transmission is similar to other respiratory infections such as influenza

#### **Clinical features**

- People may present with fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties
- Most patients developed pneumonia; and also gastrointestinal symptoms, including diarrhoea, or kidney failure
- In people with weakened immune system, the disease may have atypical presentation

## 預防方法

#### 個人衞生

- 保持雙手清潔,勤洗手
- 觸摸眼睛、口鼻前,應先洗手
- 打噴嚏或咳嗽時應用紙巾掩著口鼻,將染污的紙巾 妥善棄置並徹底清潔雙手
- 保持健康生活模式,以建立良好身體抵抗力
- 如出現呼吸道感染病徵,應佩戴口罩,並盡快求診

#### **Preventive measures**

## Personal hygiene

- Keep hands clean. Always wash your hands
- Clean your hands before touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Cover nose and mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing and dispose of soiled tissue paper in a lidded rubbish bin and wash hands thoroughly
- Build up good body immunity by having a healthy lifestyle
- Wear surgical mask and seek medical advice promptly if respiratory symptoms develop

## 環境衞生

- 保持空氣流通及家居清潔
- 避免前往人多擠迫、空氣欠流通的地方

## **Environmental hygiene**

- Maintain good ventilation and keep our home clean
- Avoid visiting crowded places with poor ventilation

#### 旅遊健康建議

- 注意個人、食物及環境衞生
- 避免到訪農場、農莊或有駱駝的市場
- 旅程中避免接觸動物(特別是駱駝)、雀鳥、 家禽或病人
- 不應飲用或食用未經處理或未經煮熟的動物產品, 包括奶類和肉類,或可能被動物分泌物、排泄物 (例如尿液) 或產品染污的食物,除非經已煮熟、 洗淨或妥為去皮
- 如在返港後出現呼吸道感染病徵,應佩戴口罩, 盡快求醫,並告知醫生近期的旅遊紀錄

### Travel health advice

- Take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene
- Avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels
- Avoid contact with animals (especially camels), birds, poultry or sick people during travel
- Do not consume raw or undercooked animal products, including milk and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled
- Wear surgical masks, seek medical advice if develop respiratory symptoms after return, and inform doctor of recent travel history



(Revised in June 2014) (2014年6月更新)