Guidelines on Prevention of Avian Influenza for Travellers

The Department of Health advises travellers to take the following precautionary measures to minimise the risk of contracting and spreading Avian Influenza.

Disease information

Affected Areas
Travellers who would like to visit the affected areas (http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/global_statistics_avian_influenza_e.pdf) should pay attention to the following health advice:

Before departure
- Prepare adequate surgical masks and 70 - 80% alcohol-based handrub.
- If feeling unwell with respiratory symptoms, such as having fever, cough, sore throat or muscle ache, put on a surgical mask and seek medical advice immediately; postpone your trip until recovery.

While travelling
- Cooperate with port health authorities and comply with all necessary immigration procedures and health checks at destinations.
- Observe personal hygiene
  - Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
  - 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 the toilet; after touching public installations; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing.
  - Wash hands with liquid soap and water for at least 20 seconds, then dry with a disposable paper towel or a hand dryer.
  - If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 – 80 % alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative.
  - Have tissue paper handy and cover the mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing.
  - Do not spit or litter. Use a tissue paper to hold your spit and discard it
into a lidded rubbish bin.

- Have surgical masks handy and put on one if you develop respiratory symptoms.
- Do not share towels or personal items.

- Observe food hygiene
  - Five keys to food safety:
    - Choose safe raw materials
    - Keep hands and utensils clean
    - Separate raw and cooked food
    - Cook thoroughly
    - Keep food at safe temperature
  - Use serving chopsticks and spoons at meal times. Do not share lunch boxes or drinks.

- Avoid touching poultry, birds, animals or their droppings.
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms.
- Maintain healthy lifestyle practices throughout the trip; do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption.
- Watch out for changes in health condition during the trip. If you develop symptoms of an infection such as fever, respiratory or bowel symptoms during the trip, inform your tour leader/tour guide and consult a doctor promptly.

After returning home

- Travellers who develop infectious disease symptoms up to 10 days after their return from affected areas should put on a surgical mask, seek medical advice and inform doctor of the travel history.

For more information, please visit

- Travel Health Service website at http://www.travelhealth.gov.hk/

Centre for Health Protection
January 2017
(Last updated on 27 March 2019)

Central Health Education Unit, Centre for Health Protection