

香港特別行政區政府
衛生署
香港灣仔皇后大道東 213 號
胡忠大廈 17 樓及 21 樓



THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
WU CHUNG HOUSE, 17TH & 21ST FLOORS,
213 QUEEN'S ROAD EAST,
WANCHAI, HONG KONG

本署檔號 Our Ref.:

來函檔號 Your Ref.:

電話 Tel.: (852) 2835 1822

圖文傳真 Fax: (852)

3 June 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome and Local Dengue Fever Case

We would like to provide updates about the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) situation and the local dengue fever case confirmed on 2 June 2015, and appeal for your support in promoting the health messages about prevention of both diseases.

MERS

As of 3 June, 29 MERS cases had been reported by Korea. In addition, there was one case exported from Korea to Huizhou, Guangdong.

A few cases recently reported by the health authority of Korea did not have direct contact with the index and could be regarded as tertiary cases.

In view of this evolving situation in Korea, the public is advised to avoid unnecessary visit to all healthcare facilities in Korea.

With regard to the first MERS case exported from Korea to Mainland China, epidemiological investigations and contact tracing are ongoing. The Department of Health (DH) has enhanced its surveillance mechanism with public and private hospitals, practising doctors and at boundary control points; and would maintain close communication with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the relevant health authorities.

DH is also closely monitoring the situation about additional cases of MERS reported to the WHO by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Qatar on 1 June.

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aspire to be an internationally renowned public health authority*

According to the WHO, among the recently exported cases who reported performing Umrah in the KSA, investigation revealed that they had either visited a health-care facility or had come into contact with camels or raw camel products while in the KSA. Scientific evidence supports the premise that camels are the primary source of MERS-CoV resulting in human infection. A study further suggested that human MERS-CoV infections could occur through close contact with infected camels.

Travellers are reminded to 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;
- Wash hands regularly before and after touching animals in case of visits to farms or barns;
- 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;
- Seek medical consultation immediately if feeling unwell;
- Avoid visits to health-care settings with MERS patients;
- Wash hands before touching the eyes, nose and mouth, and after sneezing, coughing or cleaning the nose; and
- Wash hands before eating or handling food, and after using the toilet.

Dengue Fever

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of DH announced on 2 June that a local case of dengue fever was confirmed. The male patient, aged 58 with good past health, lives in Grandway Garden, Sha Tin, New Territories and worked at Cheung Hing Mansion, 15 Cheung Wong Road, Prince Edward, Kowloon. He recalled frequent mosquito bites near his residence. He had no travel history outside Hong Kong within the month before onset of symptoms.

Upon notification and laboratory confirmation, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and promptly informed the FEHD for vector investigation and mosquito control. The relevant management offices and District Offices under the Home Affairs Department have also been informed for corresponding follow-up. The Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Mosquito-borne Diseases will convene an urgent meeting this week to follow up on the case as well as local prevention and control measures.

Relevant press release issued by the DH on 2 June is accessible at http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/39835.html.

Dengue viruses encompass four different serotypes. The symptoms of first infection with one are usually mild, but subsequent infections with the others are more likely to result in a serious complication, namely dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF). DHF is a severe and potentially fatal complication. Without proper treatment, the DHF case fatality rate can exceed 20 per cent.

The incubation period of dengue fever ranges from three to 14 days, commonly four to seven days. Anyone feeling unwell after returning from a trip should seek medical advice as soon as possible and provide travel details to their doctors.

Members of the public should take measures to protect themselves against mosquito bites, prevent the accumulation of stagnant water and maintain good environmental hygiene to remove breeding sites.

A copy of the leaflet on dengue fever is attached.

The public may also visit websites below for more information:

- The CHP Website (<http://www.chp.gov.hk>)
- The CHP Facebook Page (<http://www.facebook.com/CentreforHealthProtection>);
- The CHP YouTube Channel (<http://www.youtube.com/c/ChpGovHkChannel>)
- Travel Health Service of DH (<http://www.travelhealth.gov.hk>)
- The FEHD's Guidebook on Control and Prevention of Mosquito Breeding (http://www.fehd.gov.hk/tc_chi/safefood/handbook_prev_mos_breeding.html).

We would like to call on your support to disseminate and promote the health messages on prevention of MERS and dengue fever and mobilise your colleagues, work associates and business partners to sustain the anti-mosquito efforts.

If you would like to request health educational materials related to MERS and dengue fever, please complete the form attached and return to us.

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'AF' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

(Dr Anne FUNG)
for Director of Health

Encl.