

Guidelines on Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) for Tour Leaders and Tour Guides Operating Overseas Tours

The Department of Health advises tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours to take the following precautionary measures to minimise the risk of themselves as well as that of fellow travellers in contracting and spreading COVID-19.

Disease information

<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/24/102466.html>

Before departure, take heed of the latest information on inbound travel. If tour leaders or tour guides require quarantine or medical surveillance, stop travelling or cease reception of travellers. Details please visit the designated page at

<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html>

Tour leaders and tour guides are key persons for members of the tour group when travelling overseas, and also take care of their health during the trip. They are advised to adopt the following recommendations:

Before the Trip

- Please refer to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) website for countries / areas with reported cases of COVID-19:
https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf
- Check with the consulate or health authorities for any health advice or travel advisory imposed at the destination. Inform group members and make suitable arrangements in advance if necessary.
- Prepare the following:
 - ◆ A list of clinics, doctors and hospitals at the destination
 - ◆ Some useful items such as tissue paper, surgical masks, thermometers and vomit bags for members' use when necessary
 - ◆ 70 to 80% alcohol-based handrub for hand hygiene when hand washing facilities are not available
 - ◆ Telephone numbers of family members of the group
 - ◆ Telephone numbers of relevant consulates in the destination

During the Trip

Tour leader or tour guide should pay attention to announcements by local authorities.

Restaurants

- Patronise reputable and hygienic restaurants which provide liquid soap and hand washing facilities.
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served.
- Request for serving chopsticks and spoons.

The Tour Coach

- Arrange an appropriate coach for the size of group to avoid overcrowding inside the coach.
- The driver should clean the interior of the coach every time before and after carrying tourists.
 - ◆ For general purpose, cleanse with appropriate disinfectant. Use 70% alcohol for metallic surface.
 - ◆ If the interior is contaminated by respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, use strong absorbent disposable towels to clean up the visible matter. Then disinfect the surface and 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.
- Inspect the air conditioning system frequently to ensure good ventilation.
- Make vomit bags and tissue paper available for travellers' use.

Health Advice for Group Members

- Put on a surgical mask all the time. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask.
- Face mask is not recommended for children under the age of 2 years without supervision.
- Request members to cooperate with port health authorities and comply with all necessary immigration procedures and health checks at destinations.
- When travelling to countries / areas with active community transmission of COVID-19 virus, members should avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so after returning to Hong Kong.
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene.
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry / birds or their droppings.
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms.

- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections.
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served.
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled.
- Remind members to observe good personal, food and environmental hygiene:

Personal hygiene

- ◆ Surgical mask can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask.
- ◆ Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- ◆ Keep hands clean at all times. Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching your mouth, nose or eyes; before eating; after using the toilet; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposal paper towel. When the hands are cleaned, do not touch the water tap directly again (for example, using a paper towel to wrap the faucet before turn it off).
- ◆ If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80% alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative.
- ◆ After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs.
- ◆ Do not share towels or personal items.

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.
- Remind members to 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 feeling unwell especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the tour leader or tour guide and seek medical advice at once.
- Provide the following information to members for use in case of any discomfort or emergency:
 - ◆ The name, room number and telephone number of the tour leader/tour guide
 - ◆ Telephone number of the hotel's reception desk

If a Group Member Feels Unwell

- The tour leader/tour guide should assist the sick group member in body temperature checking.
- If member presents with respiratory symptoms, such as cough or fever [oral temperature 37.5°C (99.5°F) or above; or ear temperature 38°C (100.4°F) or above]:
 - ◆ The sick member and his / her carers should put on a surgical mask immediately;
 - ◆ Arrange for medical attention at once.
- Seek medical advice on whether the sick member could continue travelling with other members of the group. If required, the tour members should follow the instructions given by the local health authorities.
- If the sick member does not experience a fever but has other discomfort, it is still necessary to arrange for medical attention.

After the Trip

- Take heed of the latest travel advice.
- Group members are required to follow health quarantine arrangements. For details, please visit:
 - <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html>
- Remind group members to put on a surgical mask after returning to Hong Kong. If experiencing a fever or other symptoms after returning, consult a doctor promptly, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals.
- Keep personal information and telephone numbers of the group members for at least 1 month to facilitate the Centre for Health Protection's investigation if required.

For more information, please visit:

- Travel Health Service website:
<https://www.travelhealth.gov.hk/eindex.html>
- Outbound Travel Alert - Security Bureau website:
<https://www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota>
- COVID-19 thematic website:
<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/>

Centre for Health Protection

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