Guidelines on Prevention of Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent for Travellers

The Department of Health advises travellers to take the following precautionary measures to minimise the risk of contracting and spreading Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent.

Disease information
https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/24/102466.html

Affected Areas
Travellers who would like to visit the affected countries/areas should pay attention to the following health advice:

Before departure
- Prepare adequate surgical masks and 70 to 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.
- Avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible transmission of novel coronavirus infection. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days 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.
- Observe personal hygiene
  o Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
  o Keep hands clean at all times. Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching your eyes, mouth or nose; before handling food or eating; after going to the 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.
- 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.
- Have tissue paper handy and cover the mouth and nose 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.
- Have surgical masks handy and put on one if you have a fever and/or 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 animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings.
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms.
- 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.
- 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 and/or respiratory symptoms during the trip, inform your tour leader/tour guide and seek medical advice at once.

**After returning home**

Consult a doctor promptly if having a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.

**For more information, please visit**


Centre for Health Protection
9 January 2020
(Last updated on 20 January 2020)