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19 March 2020

Dear Members of Expatriate Community,

Health Advice for the Expatriate Community in Hong Kong on Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

The World Health Organization has declared the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a pandemic on 11 March, with confirmed cases found in many places all over the world. It is expected that the number of cases, deaths and countries affected will continue to surge. In this connection, members of the public should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal and environmental hygiene.

Health Advice

2. In order to minimise the risk of transmitting COVID-19, members of the public are urged to –
 - (a) Maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene (see attached health advice for general public at **Annex** for details);
 - (b) Consult a doctor promptly when you are experiencing a fever, cough, sore throat or other symptoms.



3. Members of the public are reminded that currently Hong Kong imposes compulsory quarantine to people coming into Hong Kong, except Macao and Taiwan. Hence, Members of the public are urged to avoid non-essential travel outside Hong Kong. If it is unavoidable to travel to countries/areas outside Hong Kong, they should –

- (a) If travelling to countries/areas with active community transmission of COVID-19, 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 until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- (b) After returning to Hong Kong, observe the quarantine requirement; if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, seek medical attention promptly; take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.
- (c) If symptoms develop on the aircraft, put on a surgical mask promptly and inform the aircrew member. The aircrew member then notifies the ground control centre and the Port Health Division of the Department of Health according to the established procedure. Staff from the Port Health Division would follow up with the patient upon arrival.
- (d) Complete the health declaration form in detail and follow instructions from the port health office after arrival.
- (e) Within the 14 days of returning from the affected areas, observe for health condition, put on a surgical mask, and be self-isolated as far as possible. If develop a fever or respiratory symptoms, consult a doctor promptly at public clinic or hospital, and call the hotline of the Department of Health at 2125 1122.

4. In addition, we all need to work together to intensify measures on **social distancing**. Members of the public are advised strongly to reduce social contact to protect themselves and others: stay at home as far as possible; stay away from crowded places, such as cinema, pubs, concerts, karaoke, places for religious services, etc. ; work from home if feasible; avoid social gatherings; do not shake

hands when meeting other people; and avoid meal gatherings. Enterprises are also appealed to make flexible work arrangement for employees to tie in with the Government strategies to fight the disease.

5. Please visit our Facebook and thematic website (<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>) regularly for further information and updates.

6. Feel free to disseminate the information to your fellow colleagues, work associates and/or business partners so that they could adopt proper preventive measures.

7. Thank you very much for your support. Together, we fight the virus!

Yours faithfully,



(Dr Heston KWONG)

For Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health

Guidelines on Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) for the General Public

The Department of Health advises the general public to take the following precautionary measures to minimise the risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19.

Disease information

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

Travel advice

- All people entering Hong Kong from the Mainland are required to undergo compulsory quarantine for 14 days upon their arrival.
- The health quarantine arrangements on inbound travellers from overseas:
 - I. Quarantine at quarantine centre

People arriving in Hong Kong who have been to the following countries / areas in the past 14 days, regardless of whether they are Hong Kong residents, will have to stay in a quarantine centre for quarantine.

 - Daegu and Gyeongsangbuk-do in Korea
 - Iran
 - Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto regions in Italy
 - II. Compulsory quarantine

People arriving in Hong Kong who have been to any overseas countries / areas in the past 14 days, regardless of whether they are Hong Kong residents, will be subject to compulsory quarantine.
- For the latest travel advice, please visit the COVID-19 thematic website at <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/>

Health advice for the general public

Members of the public are urged to go out less and reduce social activities such as meals gatherings or other gatherings, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible.

Members of the public are strongly urged to avoid non-essential travel outside Hong Kong. If it is unavoidable to travel to countries / areas outside Hong Kong, they should put on a surgical mask and continue to do so for 14 days upon their return to Hong Kong.

- When travelling to countries / areas with active community transmission of COVID-19 virus, the public 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 until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong.
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.
- 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.
- Maintain good 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.
 - Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose.
 - 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 disposable 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.
 - When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.
 - N95 respirators are generally not recommended for use by the general public in community settings because special training is required for proper wearing and removal of the mask. Otherwise the infective risk due to inadequate protection and contamination may be ironically increased.
 - Avoid going to crowded places with poor ventilation if you are feeling unwell.
- Maintain good environmental hygiene
 - Maintain good indoor ventilation.
 - Home should be cleaned thoroughly at least once per week with 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 10 ml of bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 990 ml of water), leave for 15-30 minutes and then rinse with water. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol.
 - If places are contaminated by respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, use strong absorbent disposable towels to clean up the visible matter. Then disinfect the surface and the 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.
 - Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-traps), to ensure environmental hygiene. For details, please refer to https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/make_sure_the_trap_is_not_dry.pdf
 - Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use.

- Maintain healthy lifestyle
 - Build up good body resistance and maintain healthy lifestyle. This can be achieved through balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate rest.
 - Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption.

For more information

Please visit the COVID-19 thematic website at

<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/>

Centre for Health Protection

15 January 2020

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