

## **EDUCATION BUREAU CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO 112/2007**

From : Secretary for Education

To : Supervisors and Heads of All Schools

Ref : EDB(SD\_CT)/ADM/20/5/05/1Pt.10

Date : 30 August 2007

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### **Prevention of Mosquito-transmitted Diseases**

#### **Summary**

According to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Ovitrap Indices, which reflected the prevalence of the mosquito vector for Dengue Fever, have reached very alarming levels in some districts in July 2007. Schools should, therefore, be vigilant over the hygienic conditions of their campus during this wet season.

#### **Details**

2. In Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No.123/2003 issued on 27 May 2003, schools were advised to inspect the school environment at least once a week and to refer to the 'Weekly Mosquito Inspection Programme for Schools' recommended by the FEHD for eliminating mosquitoes. In view of the extensive distribution of mosquito vector for Dengue Fever in certain locations lately, schools are reminded that they should persistently implement the programme and conduct inspections regularly to remove potential breeding places for mosquitoes. Schools are also requested to take every necessary step to ensure that the school premises and the environment pose no threat of mosquito breeding and the highest code of hygiene is observed. General precautionary measures against mosquitoes are at the Annex for reference.

#### **Reporting Cases & Enquiries**

3. If schools need any expert advice on mosquito control or report any mosquito black spots being found in the schools' vicinity, please contact the FEHD Hotline at 28680000. Should you notice any increase in the number of sickness absence, fever or other symptoms of infection in your school, please inform the Central Notification Office of the Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health, as soon as possible by phone (2477 2772) or by fax (2477 2770).

Mrs Michelle WONG  
for Secretary for Education

c.c. Heads of Sections – for information

**General Information on the Prevention of Mosquito-transmitted Diseases**

1. Dengue Fever is a disease caused by dengue viruses. The viruses are transmitted to humans through mosquito bites. There is no person to person spread. The mosquito *Aedes albopictus*, a vector known to transmit the disease, can be found in Hong Kong. The mosquito likes to bite people during daytime, especially two hours after sunrise and two hours before sunset. Symptoms include high fever for three to five days, severe headache, muscle and joint pain, eye pain, nausea, vomiting and skin rash. In severe cases, it may cause bleeding, shock, and death to the patients. Children normally would have milder symptoms than adults.

2. Japanese encephalitis is transmitted by Culicine mosquitoes living mainly in rural areas. The mosquitoes breed in water-logged fields and marshes. Symptoms include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, impaired mental state, coma, tremors, occasional convulsions (especially in infants) and paralysis.

3. The best way to avoid mosquito-transmitted diseases is to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes and avoid mosquito bites. In this connection, schools are requested to remind staff and students to take the following precautionary measures recommended by the Department of Health (DH) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD):

- put all used cans and bottles into dustbins with cover;
- change water for plants at least once a week, leaving no water in the saucers underneath flowerpots;
- cover tightly all water containers, wells and water storage tanks;
- keep all drains free from choke;
- level all defective ground surfaces to prevent the accumulation of stagnant water;
- wear long-sleeved clothes and long trousers when going outdoors;
- use insect repellent over the exposed parts of the body;
- use mosquito screens, nets and trappers where appropriate; and
- report to the FEHD on any mosquito black spots being found in the schools' vicinity at 2868 0000.

4. To ensure that the school premises are clean and do not have any mosquito breeding grounds, schools are advised to set up the anti-mosquito patrol teams to inspect the school environment. Relevant proforma can be downloaded from the website of the FEHD ([http://www.info.gov.hk/fehd/safefood/mos\\_weekly/schools.rtf](http://www.info.gov.hk/fehd/safefood/mos_weekly/schools.rtf)). Please note

that schools may be prosecuted for allowing the breeding of mosquitoes as stipulated in the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132).

5. For further information, schools may visit the websites of the DH and the FEHD at <http://www.chp.gov.hk> and <http://www.info.gov.hk/fehd/index.html> respectively.