

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (88) in DH CDB/9/12/5 Pt.1

23 December 2022

Dear Principal / Person-in-charge,

**Vigilance against Respiratory Syncytial Virus**

We are writing to update you on the recent increased detection of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) under laboratory surveillance and would like to remind you to maintain vigilance against respiratory tract infection at school.

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has observed a recent increase in detection of RSV under laboratory surveillance. The number of RSV detections increased from 33 in the week ending 3 December to 66 in the week ending 17 December. The number of institutional outbreak related to RSV remained low.

RSV is a common cause of respiratory tract infection. It usually affects elderly people and young children at the age of five or below. As schools are collective assembly places, infectious diseases could easily spread among people through daily contacts. Sources of infection could come from staff, visitors or students (especially those having active symptoms). In this regard, you are urged to reinforce preventive measures in your institution so as to mitigate the impact of respiratory tract infection.

***To prevent outbreaks of respiratory tract infection, schools should actively check the body temperature of all students every day when they arrive at school so as to identify students with fever. Staff should also check their temperature before work every day. Students and staff with fever or respiratory illnesses should not be allowed to attend school regardless of their rapid antigen test results. They should wear a mask and seek medical attention promptly.***



We would like to draw your attention, in particular, to measures on temperature screening, hand hygiene, wearing mask and keeping social distancing, as well as the parts related to meal arrangement and physical activities, etc. For detailed information on monitoring of body temperature, please refer to Section 2.3 of the “Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools / Kindergartens /Kindergartens-cum-Child Care Centres/ Child Care Centres”, published by the CHP.

The following measures are advised to prevent respiratory tract infection:

- 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 performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one’s eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub as an effective alternative;
- Cover the nose and mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- 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.
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

You may wish to refer the CHP’s guidelines on proper hand hygiene and proper use of mask, which are accessible at the CHP webpage <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/460/19728.html> and <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/460/19731.html>; and video clips produced by the CHP on personal and environmental hygiene, which are available under “Video Demonstration” section of “Infection Control Corner” at the CHP website (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/resources/346/index.html>):

If you notice an increase in fever/respiratory illnesses among children/ students, clients or staff, please report promptly to the CHP’s Central

Notification Office (Tel: 2477 2772; Fax: 2477 2770). The CHP will conduct epidemiological investigation and provide advice on necessary prevention and control measures.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and lines, positioned above the printed name.

(Dr. KH KUNG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health