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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SINGAPORE

23/06/2009

Influenza A (H1N1) - MOH Press Releases

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On 22 June, Singapore has confirmed another 26 new cases (143rd to 168th cases) of Influenza A (H1N1-2009) comprising 17 local cases and 9 cases with travel history. . This brings the total number of confirmed cases in Singapore to 168.

Among the 17 new local cases include:

- * 2 additional cases from the Riverlife Church cluster,
- * 1 additional case from the Butter Factory cluster,
- * 9 cases from a new cluster linked to a camp by the Fishermen of Christ Church
- * 1 case who had contact with an earlier confirmed case,
- * 2 cases who had contact with an imported case, and
- * 2 unlinked cases who did not have any travel history or known contact with confirmed cases.

The 9 imported cases had travelled to Australia, USA, Philippines, UK and Canada.

MOH Advisory to all travellers

Those planning to travel should check the MOH website for the latest updates on the list of countries with confirmed cases of H1N1 so that they can make considered decisions on whether to proceed with their travel plans. For more information on Influenza A (H1N1-2009), please access MOH's website at www.moh.gov.sg, call the MOH hotline at 1800-333 9999, or visit www.flu.gov.sg.

Advisory for Singaporeans/Singapore residents returning from countries affected by Influenza A (H1N1):

In a pandemic outbreak, when the H1N1 virus is all over the world, and may last for a long time, specific travel advisory may become increasingly impractical. MOH encourages Singaporeans to keep themselves abreast of developments of the country they are planning to visit, and take note of the total number of cases reported, number of deaths and export cases from these countries.

Travellers who have been to countries that have been considered by WHO to have sustained community transmission, as well as countries that have been reported to have exported cases (**ie. Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Dominican Republic, Japan, Mexico, Panama, Philippines, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States of America**) [*Please also refer to moh.gov.sg for latest updates*] should immediately call 993 for medical assistance if they feel unwell within seven days of arrival. If you are feeling unwell, they should avoid travelling and should not engage in extensive community activities such as working, shopping and participating in mass activities.

If travel to these areas is unavoidable, we encourage travellers to take the following precautionary measures:

- Pay attention to announcements from the local government.
- Follow local public health guidelines, including any movement restrictions and prevention recommendations.
- Avoid crowded areas and contact with anyone who appears unwell.
- Maintain high standards of personal hygiene at all times.
- Wash hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water, especially before touching the eyes, nose or mouth.

- Turn quickly away from anyone near if they are about to cough or sneeze.
- Cover the nose and mouth with a piece of tissue when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of the tissue paper properly in the dust bin after use.

After your return to Singapore from countries with sustained community transmission

Pay close attention to your health for 7 days, watching out for symptoms such as :

- High fever (> 38 deg C)
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Body aches
- Runny nose
- Headaches
- Tiredness

If you have any such symptoms, you should call 993 promptly for an ambulance. You should avoid taking public transport or taxi to minimise exposure. To help in contact tracing, the public may find it helpful to keep records of their movements for 7 days (for example by keeping taxi receipts) after their return.

What should you do if you fall ill overseas

You should consult a doctor as soon as possible and refrain from travelling until you are certified fit by the doctor. This is to avoid infecting other passengers and putting them to great inconvenience if they have to be quarantined. This advisory is in line with the WHO's recommendations for people who are ill to delay international travel and for people who develop symptoms following travel to seek medical attention.

Relevant FAQs

Qn: What measure will be taken to other travellers if there is a confirmed case on the plane?

For Persons who are close contacts of the sick traveller

We will identify and quarantine passengers who were sitting near to the sick traveller or those who had been part of his travelling party, and monitor them. During quarantine, close contacts who develop flu-like symptoms within 7 days from the day they disembark from the plane, should call 993 (a free ambulance service) for the ambulance to transport them to TTSH Emergency Department for a thorough assessment.

Persons who are not close contacts of the sick traveller

Passengers who are not close contacts with the sick traveller are advised to monitor their temperature daily and check themselves for flu-like symptoms. If they develop flu-like symptoms within 7 days from the day they disembark from the plane, they should call 993 (a free ambulance service) for the ambulance to transport them to TTSH Emergency Department for a thorough assessment.

Qn: Should people carry Tamiflu, so they can take it the moment they feel the flu is coming on?

As with any other medication, there are potential side effects related to the use of Tamiflu. We would advise that they see a doctor early if they are feeling unwell rather than to self-medicate.

Other Influenza A (H1N1) FAQs

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