



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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Miss Mary SO
Clerk to Panel on Health Services
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Miss So,

Meeting of Legislative Council Panel on Health Services on 13 May 2009

**Prevention and Control of human swine influenza infection in Hong Kong –
Follow-up action**

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Health Services on 13 May 2009, we briefed Members on the Administration's strategy and management of human swine influenza. The Administration was suggested to draw up a guideline on administration of Tamiflu to passengers on board the airplanes bound for Hong Kong should they display symptoms suggestive of human swine influenza, subject to the advice of onboard health professional and/or medical support from the ground. The Administration's response is as follows –

The symptoms of human swine influenza are similar to diseases caused by other respiratory pathogens. It is difficult to diagnose a case of human swine influenza without laboratory testing. On the other hand, antiviral drugs including oseltamivir (known by trade name as Tamiflu), should only be prescribed by registered doctors. In considering whether antiviral drugs should be prescribed to a patient, doctors will take into account the circumstances and health needs of the patient, the presence of any contraindication, the benefits of taking the anti-viral drugs, and the possible adverse side effects. As such, self administration of oseltamivir for passengers with upper respiratory symptoms is not recommended, in particular having regard to the possibility of emergence of antiviral resistance.

At present, health advice messages on human swine influenza are broadcast on inbound flights before arrival in Hong Kong. Furthermore, if a passenger on board an inbound aircraft develops respiratory symptoms, cabin crew members of the flight will make suitable arrangements such as relocating the ill passenger to a more isolated area in the aircraft, designating one cabin crew member to look after him/her, and designating a specific lavatory for his/her exclusive use. The ill passenger would also be advised to wear a surgical mask. The pilot of the aircraft would inform the Air Traffic Control, which will in turn inform Port Health Office of the Department of Health of Hong Kong. After landing, staff of the Port Health Office will assess the health condition of the ill passenger and arrange him/her for further examination if necessary.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Eliza YAU)
for Secretary for Food and Health