General guidelines for travelling to areas affected by Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)

Colleagues and students are advised to observe the following travel guidelines for minimising the related health risks while going to countries/areas with confirmed cases of MERS.

1. When planning for a trip:
   1.1 Obtain the latest information about your destinations. Please also check the latest situation of MERS and affected areas at the following website for making appropriate assessment:
   1.2 Follow the local public health guidelines, including any travel restrictions and the latest disease warning.
   1.3 Assemble a travel health kit including facemasks, alcohol wipes/gel for disinfection and a thermometer.
   1.4 Arrange adequate medical insurance coverage for the entire duration of the trip.

2. Before departure:
   2.1 Be updated on the latest situation at the destination and consider cancelling the trip if warranted.
   2.2 Establish communication with your trip organiser/Department or family members.
   2.3 If suffering from respiratory illness including fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties just before the trip, you should consider postponing the trip until recovery.

3. During the trip:
   3.1 Avoid visiting farms, barns, markets with camels or health-care settings with MERS patients.
   3.2 Avoid contact with animals (especially camels), birds, poultry or sick people. If contact cannot be avoided, wash your hands regularly before and after touching animals in case of visits to farms or barns.
   3.3 Do not consume raw or undercooked animal products, including milk and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions or products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled.
   3.4 Maintain good personal hygiene and wash hands regularly, avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
   3.5 Keep up with the latest development and if the situation worsens, you should prepare for leaving.
   3.6 Maintain regular contact with your trip organiser/Department or family members.
   3.7 If you develop respiratory illness including fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties, you should:
      - wear a facemask;
      - seek medical attention immediately;
      - avoid further travelling.
   3.8 Wear a facemask when you are required to take care of people with respiratory illness.

4. After returning:
   4.1 After returning from the trip, you should pay close attention to your health and avoid crowded places for at least 14 days.
   4.2 If you develop respiratory illness including fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties after the trip, you should:
      - wear a facemask and seek medical attention immediately;
      - let the doctor know your recent travel history;
      - follow the doctor’s advice which may require quarantine if necessary;
      - inform your Department/Office.

For further assistance, please contact the Environmental Health and Safety Section of the Estates Office at 3411 7997 or email ehsu@hkbu.edu.hk.

Environmental Health and Safety Section, Estates Office
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