

24 April 2013

Dear Valued Clients

1. Latest update on situation in China

- a. Almost a month has passed since the first case of H7N9 was announced on 1st April by WHO.
- b. To date, WHO, Chinese officials and a joint mission of medical experts are still working intensively and visiting multiple sites in both Shanghai and Beijing to try to identify the source of the infection.
- c. As of 23 April 2013 1430 CET, a total of 108 laboratory confirmed H7N9 cases, including 22 deaths have been reported.

2. New FAQs

- a. **Why is the source of infection still not identified? We have read reports about H7N9 being tested positive in chickens and birds**

Current evidence suggests that poultry is a vehicle for transmission but epidemiologists have not been able to demonstrate a strong and clear link. Only a handful of chickens and birds tested are positive for H7N9 but none of them showed any signs of illness. With such a contrasting situation in animals, experts are still uncertain where the source of infection for humans can be.

- b. **I read reports that there were family members who got infected with H7N9. Is this a sign of human to human transmission?**

Of the many hundreds of people who were in close contact with the H7N9 patients, very few cases of them have become ill as well. Experts are paying close contact to these patients. These may be sporadic cases of one person passing the disease to another or they may all have been exposed to the source of infection without realising it. Currently, there is still **NO** evidence of any **easy and sustained** person-to-person transmission.



c. **I read about mutation/transformation of viruses. Is H7N9 doing that?**

Continuing assortments/transformation of influenza viruses is one of their unique features. That is why we need a different influenza vaccine every year because it's always changing. We are now close to a month into the discovery of this virus and there hasn't been any major adjustments noted so far. However, it is unpredictable what can happen in future and experts are closely monitoring the situation.

3. Things to do now!

- a. Remember your influenza vaccination.
- b. Upkeep your good personal hygiene practices.
- c. Adequate rest of at least 7 hours daily and adequate hydration. Drink at least 7 glasses of water a day to prevent dehydration in the recent hot and humid weather. This boosts your immunity system to combat common viruses.
- d. If you don't take enough Vitamin C from fruits, consider supplementation with our effervescent Vitamin C tablets 1000mg or chewable Vitamin C tablets to increase your body's vitamin storage which in turn boosts your immunity.



4. For travellers



- a. Travel season is coming and Raffles Medical will be launching our Travel Clinic on 2nd May 2013.
- b. Do visit our travel doctors at Raffles Medical at Raffles Hospital or Raffles Medical at Changi Airport Terminal 3 at least 2 weeks before your planned departure.
- c. Our travel doctors can share with you further on the prevailing diseases and medical issues you may encounter in the countries you are visiting and tailor a management plan specific to you to reduce the risks of such problems occurring.
- d. Influenza vaccines, other essential vaccines and medications can then be arranged for you to make your holiday trip a memorable and enjoyable one.



Stay healthy, stay safe. We will continue to provide more advice and updates in our next issue.

Should you require further information or clarification, please contact our Corporate Services Team or Account Managers for assistance.

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