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MERCANTILE MARINE OFFICE,  
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1 April 2003

To:  
Shipowners, ship managers and ship masters of Hong Kong ships

Dear Sir,

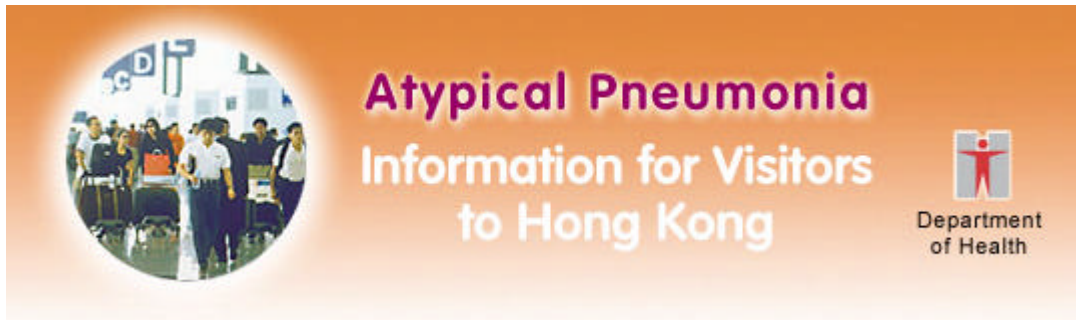
**Atypical Pneumonia**

Please note the attached leaflets published by the Department of Health, Hong Kong and disseminate the information contained therein to the attention of the crew of your ship(s) intending to call Hong Kong and the ports in other affected areas.

Yours faithfully,

(M.Y. Chan)  
for Superintendent  
Mercantile Marine Office

c.c. HKSOA (Fax: 2865 1582)  
Hong Kong Seamen's Union (Fax: 2770 2015)  
The Amalgamated Union of Hong Kong Seafarers (Fax: 2855 0775)  
Merchant Navy Officers' Guild (Fax: 2541 5064)



The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently received reports of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, commonly known as atypical pneumonia, in various parts of the world.

Hong Kong is working closely with the WHO to prevent and control the spread of atypical pneumonia to protect the health of residents and visitors.

Recently, a number of health care workers and some other people in Hong Kong have also been affected by atypical pneumonia.

The Department of Health and various health-related institutions and universities are working together to control the spread of the disease.

Hong Kong has world-class medical services and facilities, and strict disease surveillance systems in place.

The government's health authorities will provide daily updates on the latest situation to ensure residents and visitors are well informed about how the disease is being controlled.

### **Atypical Pneumonia**

Atypical pneumonia can be transmitted by respiratory droplets over a short distance of one metre, or by contact with a patient's respiratory secretions.

Infected persons will display the following symptoms: fever (over 38 degrees Celsius) and chills, coughing, shortness of breath, headache, aching body and general malaise.

### **Preventive Measures**

- Pay particular attention to personal hygiene. Do not spit. Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing, and then clean your hands with liquid soap straight away. Dry hands with a disposable towel or hand dryer.
- Wash your hands before touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Consult a doctor promptly if you develop a fever or cough.
- Increase your body immunity: Eat a balanced diet, take regular exercise and get adequate rest. Do not smoke.

For more information:

Call the Department of Health's pre-recorded health education hotline on **2833 0111**, or the **Department of Health** hotline on **2961 8968** during office hours, or visit the Department's website at : [www.info.gov.hk/dh](http://www.info.gov.hk/dh).

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