

Pre-emergency Measures Extended Again: **Curb the Infections by All Means!**

The period of **pre-emergency measures** for Hyogo Prefecture has been **re-extended to March 21**. Although the new case counts in the prefecture are decreasing, **the weekly average still exceeds 3,000**, and **the hospital bed occupancy rate remains at a high level of over 60%**. Many cases at homes, elderly facilities, schools, nursery schools, and business establishments have been reported, and the number of deaths is increasing among elderly people. We request Hyogo citizens to **take thorough infection prevention measures suited to combat the Omicron variant so that we can contain the infection surge as soon as possible**.

1. Thoroughly implement basic infection prevention measures

- **Thoroughly implement basic infection prevention measures in everyday life**, such as **ventilating rooms regularly, wearing face masks properly, frequently washing or disinfecting your hands, keeping a safe distance** from others, and **achieving “Zero Cs”** by avoiding the Three Cs (confined spaces, crowded places, and close contact).
- **Implement infection prevention measures at home**, such as frequently washing or disinfecting your hands, ventilating rooms, and managing the health of family members, **especially elderly people and children**.
- **Dine in small groups and avoid conversations** while eating. **If you have to talk**, be sure to **wear face masks** (non-woven masks are recommended).
- **Avoid sharing or reusing items and equipment** that can be exposed to droplet particles. If you need to use them, **thoroughly disinfect them** before and after use.
- If you **feel unwell** and have even **the slightest symptoms**, such as fever and cough, refrain from going out or traveling and **call and visit a medical institution**.

[Characteristics of the Omicron variant infection]

- Droplet and aerosol transmissions at poorly ventilated places are common.
- Children are likely to contract the disease, and infections at schools and homes (from children to classmates and family members) are also very common.
- Those with underlying conditions, especially elderly people, tend to have exacerbated symptoms.

2. Avoid risky behavior

- **Avoid visiting crowded places at peak hours, and stay in small groups**.
- **Elderly people and those with underlying conditions are requested to take precautions to reduce infection risks**, such as only **meeting with a small number of people that you frequently see**.
- **Facilities that attract many visitors are requested to take thorough infection prevention measures**, such as limiting the entry of visitors, urging them to wear face masks, and preventing droplets from spreading.
- **If you have symptoms, such as fever, refrain from going out**.

3. Get vaccinated

- Get the **booster dose**. **The first and second doses are also available**, so get vaccinated as soon as possible. In particular, **elderly people and those with underlying conditions are strongly recommended to get vaccinated**.

Infection prevention measures based on cluster incidents in facilities

Elderly facilities, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice proper measures based on the “infection prevention guidelines for nursing-care facilities” prepared by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and materials prepared by the Hyogo Prefectural Government, such as posters and checklist indicating how to prevent the spread of infections. (Thoroughly implement infection prevention measures on a regular basis, and provide appropriate response and care once infection cases have been confirmed.) Urge facility users and employees to get the booster dose. Thoroughly monitor the health of staff members daily and make sure they are tested frequently. Incorporate online visits or take other measures to prevent facility users and employees from catching the virus from visitors. Enhance the capacity of infection control of the facility by utilizing support programs by the prefecture, such as subsidies for infection control equipment and dispatch of doctors. Strengthen systems for infection control at elderly facilities, etc., to enable a smooth transition for facility users who are returning after hospitalization and create a better environment for care within the facility through such measures as accepting and following the guidance of Certified Nurses for Infection Control.
Schools, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid activities with a high risk of infections, such as singing in a choir and playing wind instruments (recorders, etc.) in the room without keeping a physical distance, and physical exercises where there is close-contact. During physical education classes, encourage students to wear face masks as much as possible when they are not exercising. Regarding club activities, practice matches with other schools and training camps should be temporarily restricted. Properly incorporate staggered attendance, group schooling, online learning, or other measures into the curriculum in consideration of the students’ developmental stages.
Nursery schools, certified centers for early childhood education and care, after-school centers, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urge staff members and guardians to wear face masks. It is recommended for children to wear face masks as much as possible if it is determined that they are able to wear face masks without difficulty from the perspective of their developmental status and other factors (this is a temporary measure). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Children under two years old are not recommended to wear face masks; it is required to pay extra attention to them. Pay close attention to changes in children’s physical conditions while they are wearing face masks. Children are not required to wear face masks if they are not feeling well or if it is difficult for them to wear face masks properly for an extended period of time. Prevent the spread of infections while providing childcare by avoiding activities with a high risk of infections, dividing children into small groups, etc. Frequently disinfect playground equipment and toys shared by children. Avoid holding events that involve a large number of participants. Cancel or postpone events where guardians participate. Urge children to wash their hands. Avoid seating arrangements where children are facing each other. Proactively provide tests to childcare workers, etc., who have become close contacts so they can safely return to work as soon as possible.
Business establishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a numerical target to reduce employee attendance through measures such as working-from-home (teleworking) even before the State of Emergency is announced. When employees are going on business trips to areas where a surge of infections is observed, urge them to take thorough infection prevention measures, such as wearing face masks, and avoid behavior with a high risk of infections. Business establishments providing essential services are required to review their BCPs, specify important tasks, improve systems for business continuity, and stockpile necessary supplies.