

Singapore travellers reminded to get travel shot before year-end holidays

Doctors remind Singapore travellers to get their travel shots against infectious diseases like seasonal flu and hepatitis before their year-end holidays. This is because travellers may get these highly contagious infections from abroad and spread to their loved ones upon return.

Based on past local records, close to 60 percent of hepatitis A cases from 1998 to 2007 were imported. According to a 2010 local study on Trends in Importation of Communicable Diseases into Singapore; about 70 percent of these cases were Singapore residents who contracted it while travelling.

With Singapore residents now travelling abroad more, infectious diseases physician in private practice Dr Wong Sin Yew said, "Singapore residents need to seek pre-travel health advice and vaccinations before their year-end holidays if the countries they are visiting have a high incidence of contagious diseases like flu and hepatitis. Travellers should vaccinate ahead of their travel dates as vaccines can take up to two weeks to boost immunity."

For last-minute travellers, hepatitis A vaccine (e.g. Havrix™) may be administered at any time before departure because it will still provide travellers with protection. Hepatitis B vaccine (e.g. Engerix™-b) can be administered safely within a 3-week time-frame. A combination vaccine that provides protection against both hepatitis A and hepatitis B (e.g. Twinrix™) may be considered for travellers who may be exposed to both organisms.

NHCS successfully performs Asia's first MitraClip® procedure

The National Heart Centre Singapore (NHCS) successfully performed Asia's first minimally invasive heart valve repair using the MitraClip® system on a 68-year-old female patient, Madam Margaret Lim, in April this year.

Madam Lim had severe mitral regurgitation complicated by congestive heart failure resulting in lung congestion. She was not suitable for the open surgery method due to her severely weakened heart, lung problems and previous open heart surgery. Sharing her experience, Madam Lim said, "I don't feel any pain after the procedure. Last time, I was always tired and breathless. Now, I feel more energetic and can do the household chores and go out with my friends".

Dr Yeo Khung Keong, consultant from the Department of Cardiology, NHCS and the lead physician of the procedure said, "The key advantages



of MitraClip® are improved safety, shorter hospital stay and recovery time, and less risk of complications."

MitraClip® treatment is targeted at high-risk patients with severe mitral regurgitation, a condition in which the mitral valve doesn't close tightly, allowing blood to flow backward in the heart. The

procedure is performed through a small incision in the groin approximately 1cm in length. A 4-mm-wide metallic clip is delivered through this incision to the heart where the leaky valve is clipped in the middle, reducing the amount of regurgitation.

To date NHCS has performed four cases, and all patients have reported to be doing well.

MOHH's healthcare transformation initiative honoured with Enterprise & IT Architecture Excellence Award 2011

MOH Holdings Pte Ltd (MOHH) has received the Enterprise & IT Architecture Excellence Award 2011 in the "Transformation and Planning" category, in recognition of its National Electronic Health Records Architecture (NEHRA) initiative using alfabet's planningIT, which is an integrated IT management software that aims to harmonise and support the different tasks of a business IT management approach.

The NEHRA initiative is a platform that allows the sharing

of patients' clinical information among healthcare providers across the various settings. The interoperability across health IT systems is critical to facilitate the sharing of patients' clinical information. MOHH, the national coordinator of healthcare IT in Singapore, is applying an enterprise architecture approach in a systematic and disciplined manner to achieve a coordinate and consistent national architecture in the long-term.

"With the support of alfabet's planningIT, MOHH has been

empowered to transform Singapore's healthcare system to fulfil a vision of "integrated care", where patients can move across the healthcare continuum with better coordination and collaboration across care providers," explained Peter Tan, Lead Enterprise Architect, Information Systems Division, MOHH.

The Architecture Excellence Awards 2011 were presented during the iCMG Architecture World conference in Bangalore on July 27th, 2011.