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Hong Kong demonstrates 2.5-fold increase in child myopia during pandemic

September 3, 2021 | News

Hong Kong is among cities with the highest prevalence of myopia worldwide



A recent study by The Faculty of Medicine at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CU Medicine) showed that the unprecedented level of quarantine, prohibiting outdoor activities and restricting daily routines to indoor activities, has triggered a “myopia boom” in school children in Hong Kong.

The Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences conducted a prospective population-based study to evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on myopia incidence and progression among school-aged children in Hong Kong and found a 2.5-fold increase in myopia incidence.

Hong Kong is among cities with the highest prevalence of myopia in the world, affecting more than 40% of school children at the age of eight.

Professor Calvin C.P. PANG, S. H. Ho Research Professor of Visual Sciences, CUHK and Director of the Shantou University / The Chinese University of Hong Kong Joint Shantou International Eye Centre explained, “High myopia (-6.00 diopters or above) can lead to sight-threatening complications, including glaucoma, macular degeneration, retinal detachment and cataract. Wearing glasses or having laser refractive surgery can help improve vision, but cannot resolve the eyeball elongation problem or reduce the risk of complications, therefore prevention should be given top priority.”