

Mayor's Message on the Extension of State of Emergency (August 20th to September 12th)

Hello. I'm FUSHIMI Takashi, Mayor of Hirakata City.

Now, the spread of COVID-19 is continuing.

The central government has decided to expand the state of emergency to 7 prefectures in addition to 6 declared prefectures including Osaka from August 20th, and to extend the period of the declaration from the end of August to September 12th. Based on this decision, Osaka Prefectural Government is asking restaurants and bars to stop serving alcohols and to close earlier than usual business hours. The prefectural government is also asking department stores to reduce the number of customers in basement floors by 50 % and other facilities to take stricter measures to keep away from crowds.

In the COVID-19 countermeasure meeting on August 19th, Hirakata City has decided to extend the period of our current measures such as closing city facilities at 8p.m. and limiting city events until September 12th.

The number of new corona cases was 53 in the week beginning from July 12th. However, it reached 341 cases between August 9th and 15th. It is more than 6 times in one month. The number of new corona cases is increasing among young people in entire Japan. In Hirakata, half of them is occupied by 20s. The percentage of the new corona patients between 20s and 50s is 90%. Consequently, the occupancy rate of hospital beds is more than 70% including young corona patients who need to be hospitalised. Situations remain to be unpredictable. We should take thorough anti-infectious actions. In addition, we should hurry to provide vaccines to working generations and young people.

In Hirakata, we started vaccination bookings for 50s from August. We will begin the bookings for 40s and pregnant women(※) from August 27th. Furthermore, those aged 12 to 39 will be able to apply for them from September 10th. You might have an anxiety about our previous vaccination schedule due to the fact that we were forced to rearrange it because of the shortage of vaccines. However, all of the citizens who want to get vaccines will be able to apply for the bookings based on the schedule I mentioned above.

The analysis by Osaka Prefectural Government shows that the risk of becoming severe symptoms can be reduced by getting vaccines twice. In Hirakata, the number of new corona

cases drastically decreased among those aged 65 or over. It clearly shows that the vaccines are effective against COVID-19. However, someone may worry about side effects of them. If so, please feel free to contact our booking & consultation call centre for COVID-19 vaccination (Phone No. 0120-885-755).

As you know, even if getting the vaccines, the risk of infections cannot become completely zero. In particular, delta variants have stronger infectabilities than previous corona virus. Therefore, it is quite dangerous to drop our guard now. Again, I would like to ask for taking thorough anti-infectious actions such as wearing a face mask, sterilisation, ventilation, and physical distance.

(※) “40s”→“40s and pregnant women” changed on August 24th

August 20th 2021

FUSHIMI Takashi
Mayor of Hirakata City