

REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

May 16 - 22, 2024

WEEKLY EVENTS

- Between May 20-31, 2024, the Ministry of Health of the Lao People's Democratic Republic launched a vaccination campaign against measles and rubella. The objective was to promote the importance of vaccination, especially among children under 5 years old. This campaign included administering vaccinations at district and provincial hospitals, as well as at public health facilities nationwide. The initiative was supported with vaccine supplies from the World Health Organization.
- On May 22, 2024, Bluedot Event Alerts reported on the situation in the state of Michigan, United States. Health authorities confirmed cases of avian influenza A (H5N1), marking the second such event this year. The first occurred in Texas in early April. The outbreak of avian influenza continues to be detected in dairy farms. The latest cases were workers on a dairy farm in Michigan. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have conducted nasal and ocular swabs on the farm workers who fell ill with avian influenza. The nasal swabs yielded negative results, but avian influenza was detected in the ocular swabs, indicating eye infections. Further disease investigation is ongoing.
- On May 22, 2024, the first case of Avian Influenza A (H5N1) was reported in the state of Victoria, located in southern Australia. The patient is a child who had traveled back from India in March of this year, though specific details about the travel destinations are unclear. There have been no further reports of additional cases at this time, as information is limited pending further investigation into the disease.

PERTUSSIS CAN BE PREVENTED WITH A VACCINE

The Week 20 Disease Surveillance Report (13-19 May 2024) from the Department of Disease Control reported a pertussis outbreak in Bang Saphan Noi District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. The first patient identified was a 4-year-old boy from Myanmar traveling to Thailand without a history of vaccination. Subsequently, five confirmed cases were found among close contacts, along with an additional cluster of six cases unrelated to the initial group. Most patients did not have a history of vaccination. Currently, relevant agencies are investigating and addressing the situation. Earlier this year, there was an increase in pertussis outbreaks across various regions, as reported by Bluedot Event Alerts. From January to April 2024, there was a total of 86,359 cases globally, predominantly in the People's Republic of China, Czech Republic, Spain, and the Netherlands.

Pertussis, is a respiratory bacterial infection, with an incubation period of approximately 7-10 days (up to 20 days in some cases). Symptoms include inflamed respiratory mucosa and coughing. Initially, symptoms resemble a mild cold with mild or absent fever. Unlike a cold, however, the cough becomes more severe, often in fits of 5-10 coughs, lasting 2-3 weeks. Some patients may experience severe coughing fits leading to breathing difficulties and a whooping sound, alternating with less severe coughing fits. For mild cases, the disease typically lasts 6-10 weeks. Pertussis is preventable through vaccination. Therefore, parents are advised to ensure their children receive vaccinations as scheduled in their health record books. For migrants who bring families and children to Thailand, according to the Cross-Border Migrant Worker Health Insurance Regulations of 2020, children under 7 years old can purchase health insurance from the Ministry of Public Health for 365 baht per person per year, averaging 1 baht per day. This insurance covers vaccinations on par with Thai children and allows access to continuous basic immunization services at nearby public health facilities to keep children safe from vaccine-preventable diseases.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Public Health Officials and local agencies should collaborate to educate the public about pertussis and other vaccine-preventable diseases. They should inform about the causes, symptoms, transmission, and prevention methods, prioritizing families with children. It is important to conduct public awareness campaigns periodically to emphasize the importance of bringing children for vaccinations. Recommendations should also be provided to migrants in the area regarding purchasing health insurance cards to ensure continuous vaccination for their children according to the schedule at nearby public health facilities. This effort aims to reduce the risk of disease outbreaks, severity, and complications from vaccine-preventable diseases.

INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

Multisectoral Capacity Development Program for Public Health Emergency Detection and Response in Border Areas

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