

# Department-of Disease Control Weekly Disease Forecast No.219\_RSV (21 – 27 July 2019)

From the national disease surveillance system, the Department of Disease Control reveals that Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) cases have started to occur sporadically especially among young children.

Last week, there was an outbreak of RSV in a school.

This week disease forecast reveals a continue trend of RSV occurrence during the rainy and cold seasons. Cases can be found in all age groups but severe illness normally occur in small children, babies born prematurely, elderly people aged 65 years and over, and those with underlying chronic diseases such as diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, and impaired immunity.



RSV causes respiratory infections. It can be spread easily through droplets from a sneeze or cough of an RSV patient. People can also be infected by touching hands with an RSV infected person or contaminated items. The virus enters human body through nose, eyes and mouth. Symptoms begin 4 to 6 days after infection. Most cases have mild symptoms resemble a cold that begin with fever, running nose, cough, and ear infection. Recovery from illness usually takes 8 to 15 days.

However, illness can be severe especially in babies under 6 months. Warning signs include lethargy, irritability, poor feeding, wheezing and shortness of breath. Young children and those with severe RSV illness usually need hospitalization for proper symptomatic treatment. Diagnosis can be confirmed by laboratory tests for the virus in nose and throat samples.

The Department of Disease Control (DDC) advises all people to wash hands often especially before having meals and after using toilets. Prevention, particularly for babies born prematurely and babies aged 1-2 months old, should be done by avoiding close contact with persons with flu-like or pneumonia illnesses. Avoiding sharing water cups and eating utensils is helpful. An RSV patient should be absent from school or work, put on a surgical mask and wash hands often to prevent spreading of the virus to others.

For queries or additional information, please call DDC hotline 1422.



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