

# Department of Disease Control, Weekly Disease Forecast No. 228\_ Diarrhea (22 – 28 September 2019)

According to the national disease surveillance system, this year up to 16 September, the Department of Disease Control reveals 758,321 diarrhea cases with 6 deaths. There were more female than male cases.

The disease cluster monitoring system had detected sporadic rotavirus outbreaks, i.e. 3 in 2017, 2 in 2018, and 3 in 2019. It is also noted with concerns that rotavirus diarrhea has been found more in adults and those with immuno-compromised condition.

According to this week disease forecast, the risk of rotavirus diarrhea tends to increase especially in young children aged less than 5 years old and adults who have to take care of sick children. The virus can grow well and stay longer in environment during the end of rainy season to cold season.



Rotaviruses are found in the stool and vomit of patients. The viruses are contaminated in food, water, or surfaces by the hands of those who have not washed hands adequately after using toilet. People become infected by eating or drinking contaminated food or water. Transmission may also occur through touching contaminated surfaces or objects (e.g. door-handles, water taps, toilet-seats and toys) and then touching their mouths.

Rotavirus infection is generally mild. Symptoms include fever, vomiting and watery diarrhea. The best first aid for diarrhea is drinking Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) solution to prevent dehydration. Do not use antibiotics and other diarrhea drugs such as Imodium. Young children, the elderly, and those with weaken immunity might have severe illnesses including i.e. high fever, prolong vomiting, diarrhea that lasts more than two days, or having signs of dehydration (such as crying without tears, dry mouth, little or no urination, and severe weakness). These patients need to seek hospital medical care urgently.

The Department of Disease Control advises people to always follow good personal hygiene, i.e. "eat freshly-cooked and clean food, use serving spoon and wash hands often", and drink only safe water. In households with diarrheal patients, toilets should be frequently cleaned and disinfected with bleach-based cleaner containing 2% sodium hypochlorite. Objects including toys should be cleaned and let dry in sunlight. Household members should wash hands often especially after using toilet, caring for a sick person, and before preparing or having meal.

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

