

# Department of Disease Control

## Weekly Disease Forecast No.235\_Common Communicable Diseases in Winter (10 – 16 November 2019)

Based on the Department of Disease Control's surveillance system, communicable diseases commonly found in cold weather are influenza, pneumonia, Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD), measles, and diarrhea.

For the biological factor, some viruses are actually more likely to spread during cold weather as they replicate better at cooler temperatures. In addition, the immune system is depressed to some degree by cold weather. Lower temperatures weaken the nose's first line of immune defenses. For the physical factor, more people spend time indoors and increasing the likelihood of the disease transmission.

According to this week disease forecast, these common diseases are likely to increase during this winter season especially in the mountainous areas of the Northern and the Northeastern regions.



The Department of Disease Control advises that at risk people with depressed immunity, i.e. young children, the elderly, people with chronic diseases (such as diseases with impaired immunity, diabetes mellitus, heart disease, lung disease, and anemia), take good care of themselves by:

- **Stay warm** - People at risk should keep warm at all times, in the home including in bed and wrapping up well with hat, scarf and gloves before going out. It is also a more effective way of staying warm by wearing layer dressing as air (the real insulator) is trapped between the layers as well as within the layers.
- **Eat well** – Eat the right foods and portion each meal. Nutritious foods and fresh fruits will help booster immunity.
- **Exercise daily** - **Exercise** for at least half an hour daily.
- **Be Sure to Get Sleep** - it is crucial to get enough sleep, i.e. six to eight hours, to recharge the body's batteries.
- **Breath though the nose** – Do not breath through the mouth to help warm the air up.
- **Wash hand often** – Washing hands is the easiest way to avoid catching pathogens.
- **Stay positive** – Staying positive will push oneself to get that fit body.
- **Do not drink alcohol to keep warm** – Drinking alcohol creates a sensation of warmth but it actually decreases core body temperature (hypothermia) that is dangerous to health.

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



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