

Department of Disease Control

Weekly Disease Forecast No.255_Pertussis (29 March – 4 April 2020)

From the national disease surveillance system, the Department of Disease Control (DDC) reveals that there were 19 pertussis cases with no deaths reported from 12 provinces from 1 January to 16 March 2020. Most of the cases had incomplete immunization. Age groups with the highest number of cases were newborn to 4 years (52.63%), 55 – 64 years (10.53%), and 65 years and over (10.53%).

Top five provinces with the highest incidence rates were Tak, Ubonratchathani, Nakhonsawan, and Chaiyaphum. The highest number of cases were found in the Northeastern, Northern, Central and Southern regions respectively.



According to this week's disease forecast, sporadic cases of pertussis are likely to continue particularly in young children with incomplete vaccination in areas with crowded living condition. It was noted with concern that most of the children got the infection from family members with mild respiratory symptoms.

Pertussis, or whooping cough, is an acute respiratory infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis*. Pertussis is easily transmitted through droplet contact from coughing and sneezing. The most at risk of getting the infection is the unimmunized or incompletely immunized young children (infants to 4 years old).

Pertussis initial symptoms are similar to those of common cold including low-grade fever, runny nose, sneezing, and coughing. The following characteristic symptoms are numerous rapid cough (5 to 10 coughing at a time) and high-pitched whoop (wheezing sound made when a person gasps for breath after a severe coughing). A medical care at the hospital is crucially needed for life saving.

The Department of Disease strongly advises parents to bring their children at the age of 2 months and over to receive the complete DTP immunization course as recommended by the Ministry of Public Health at the public hospital nearby. Family members with mild respiratory symptoms should stay away from infants and small children or wear mask and wash hands often.

For queries or additional information, please call DDC hot line 1422.

