

Department of Disease Control

Weekly Disease Forecast No.254_Influenza

(22 – 28 March 2020)

From the national disease surveillance system, the Department of Disease Control (DDC) reveals 87,065 influenza cases of which 3 had died. The total number of cases was higher than the median of the past five years (same time period). Age groups with the highest incidence rates were newborn to 4 Years, 5 – 9 years, and 10 – 14 years respectively. The top three highest incidence provinces were Phayao, Chiangmai and Nongkhai.

This year during 1- 19 March, there have been 22 influenza clusters in 16 provinces. Fifteen clusters occurred in crowded places including schools, universities, prisons, and workplaces

According to this week disease forecast, the occurrence of influenza is likely to continue. The peak periods will occur in rainy season (May to September) and cold season (December to February).



Influenza, or flu, is a highly contagious respiratory illness. The influenza viruses are mainly spread person to person by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. Influenza may also spread when people share eating or drinking utensils as well as when they touch surfaces with infected droplets and then touch their mouth, eyes, or nose. Therefore, people with flu-like illness (fever, sore throat, cough, stuffy or runny nose, and muscle aches) should be absent for home care, avoid close contact to and sharing utensils with others to prevent spreading of influenza viruses. They should wear face masks, or cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, and wash hands often. Medicines for relieve symptoms, enough bed rest and drinking water help patients to recover within 5 to 7 days. However, those who take medicines to relieve influenza illness but symptoms do not improve within 2 days, or those with worsen illness such as shortness of breath or rapid breathing, chest pain, persistent vomiting, confusion or sudden dizziness, a hospital medical care is immediately needed.

The DDC encourages crowded places such as schools and prisons, to run screenings for influenza to prevent outbreaks. People with flu-like illness should be isolated and maintain strict personal hygiene. Frequent cleansing of sharing spaces especially touching surfaces such as door knobs that might be contaminated with the viruses is helpful. Hand-washing facilities with soap or alcohol hand sanitizer, and face masks should be provided.

The DDC also advises people to protect themselves well from the disease and to maintain good personal hygiene. All should wash hands often and practice social distancing, i.e. avoid close contact and sharing of personal items with people who have respiratory symptoms (e.g. coughing, sneezing, running nose), wear masks in crowded places, eat newly cooked foods as well as fruits, drink 6-8 glasses of water, exercise regularly, have enough sleep, and wear proper cloths to keep warm.

Patients, who take medicines to relieve influenza illness but symptoms do not improve within 2 days, or those with worsen illness such as shortness of breath or rapid breathing, a hospital medical care is immediately needed. Hospital care is usually crucial for severe illness at risk groups including the elderly, young children aged 6 months to 2 years, pregnant women, obese people weigh 100 kg. or more, people with underlying diseases and health care personnel.

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



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