

Department of Disease Control

Weekly Disease Forecast No.260_Pertussis (3 – 9 May 2020)

From the national disease surveillance system, the Department of Disease Control (DDC) reveals that there were 31 pertussis cases with no deaths during 1 January to 21 April 2020. Most of the cases were children in the age groups newborn to 4 years (48.39%), 45 – 54 years and 35 – 44 years respectively. Top five provinces with the highest incidence rates (cases per 100,000 population) were Tak, Ubonratchathani, Buengkan, Phayao and Narathiwat. The latest case was an eight months old infant girl who had incomplete immunization.

During 2014 to 2019 there were 16 to 174 cases with 0 to 3 deaths per year. The number of cases had been on an increasing trend since 2015 especially in 2017 (174 cases). Most cases were infants aged 1 – 3 months old.



According to this week's disease forecast, sporadic cases of pertussis are likely to continue particularly in infants and young children with incomplete vaccination in areas with crowded living condition. The COVID-19 pandemic has also affected the immunization program as parents have difficulties in bringing their children to get vaccines. It was noted with concern that most of the children got the infection from adult 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 2, 4, 6, and 18 months old to receive the complete DTP immunization course and a booster dose at 4 years old as recommended by the Ministry of Public Health at the public hospital nearby. Family members with mild respiratory symptoms should wear mask, wash hands often and must stay away from infants and young children.

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



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