

Department of Disease Control

Weekly Disease Forecast No.273_Drowning (2 - 8 Aug 2020)

From the national disease surveillance system, during the past 10 years (2010 – 2019), the Department of Disease Control reveals that drowning is the first cause of deaths of Thai children under 15 years old. Drowning has caused 8,394 deaths which is approximately 893 cases per year or 2 deaths per day. The frequent causes of drowning include lack of drowning awareness and waters survival and rescue skills among children as well as inadequate adult supervision. The most risky sites of drowning are natural open water sources in the community including those built for agricultural purposes. Other factors are lack of appropriate environmental preventive measures at a local level and provision of floatation devices.

This year (2020) up to the present, there were 34 drowning incidents from 20 provinces with a total of 49 deaths. Most of the victims (34 deaths or 69.4%) were children under 15 years old. The main sites of drowning include sea, natural pond, swamp and canal (6 incidents each) and river, public pond and irrigation canal (3 incidents each).



According to this week disease forecast, the risk of drowning tends to continue during the rainy season that the water level of water sources have been increasing.

The Department of Disease Control, therefore, advises all parents to take good care of their children and never allow them to swim without adult supervision. All communities should implement preventive measures against drowning, i.e. 1) survey for risky water sources; 2) communicate and warn the communities of drowning risk and promote community participation using available channels such as village broadcast; 3) install safety fences and warning signs at all risky natural water sources and provide safety devices, e.g. empty plastic gallon jugs or bottles tied up with ropes, swimming rubber rings, sticks, and belts; 4) teach children swim and rescue skills and warn them to avoid risky water settings; and 5) promote the households with newborns to 2 years old children to keep them in playpens especially while unattended.

In case of seeing a drowning person, do not attempt to jump to rescue him or her as the person may be panic and pull you underwater. Therefore, you should use the measure “**shout, throw, and extend**”, i.e. 1) **Shout** for help from people nearby and ask them to call the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) hotline 1669; 2) **Throw** floatation devices such as empty plastic gallon jugs or bottles tied up with ropes or swimming rubber rings to the drowning person; 3) **Extend** objects such as sticks, belts or cloths to pull the person from the water; and 4) Give the person rescue breaths and CPR while waiting for the EMS team.

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



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