

Department-of Disease Control Weekly Disease Forecast No.144_Measles (22 – 28 Jan 2018)

From the national disease surveillance system, measles incidence rate has increased twice compared to the past 5 years (2013 - 2017). The highest incidence rates were found in newborn – 4 years and 15 - 24 years age groups respectively. The increasing trend was also observed in these two age groups.

In 2017, there were 2,938 measles cases. In January 2018, there were 2 measles outbreaks, i.e. one each in the Northeastern region (23 cases) and the Northern region (28 cases). Clusters of patients were also found in settings including prison, workplace, military base and hospital.



This week disease forecast reveals a continue trend of measles occurrence during this cold season since the virus remains active longer in cold weather. Measles can be found in all ages but are mostly found in young children..

The virus, found in nasal and throat secretions of the patient, is easily spread by coughing, sneezing, and close contact with patients. It is so contagious that if one person has it, 9 out of 10 people around him or her will also become infected. Common symptoms are high fever, dry coughing, running nose, red and watery eyes, and small white spots inside the cheeks that can develop in the initial stage. After several days, a rash erupts, usually on the upper neck and face. The rash then spreads eventually to trunk, hands and feet. The rash lasts 5 to 6 days, and then fades. Complications are diarrhea and middle ear infection. The most serious complications include encephalitis, pneumonia, convulsion, and blindness and may result in death. Severe measles is more likely among young children with malnutrition or weakened immunity.

Measles illness needs a hospitalization. A medical care include supportive care that ensures good nutrition, adequate fluid intake and treatment of dehydration with oral rehydration solution. Antibiotics are prescribed to treat eye and ear infections, and pneumonia.

The Department of Disease Control encourages parents to bring young children to get measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccination as scheduled by the Ministry of Public Health, i.e. the first time at the age of 9 to 12 months and the second time at the age of two and a half years. Precaution should also be taken to prevent measles transmission from a suspected infected person from 4 days prior to the onset of the rash to 4 days after the rash erupts.

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



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