

Department of Disease Control

Weekly Disease Forecast No.146_Chickenpox (5 – 11 February 2018)

From the national disease surveillance system,, there were 3,858 patients with no deaths during 1 - 29 January 2018. Most of the chickenpox cases were in the 10 - 14 years, 7 - 9 years , and 15 - 24 years age groups respectively. Most of chickenpox cases were school children. Provinces with the top five incidence rates were Phuket, Narathiwat, Maehongson, Yasothon and Lampoon.

During the past week, there were 4 school chickenpox outbreaks in 3 provinces, i.e. Mukdahan (2 incidents, 51 cases), Prachinburi (50 cases) and Pathumthani (66 cases).



According to this week disease forecast, the risk of chickenpox tends to continue during this cold season especially among school children. Outbreaks may be found in settings such as schools, factories, child development centers, and prisons. Number of cases usually peak during January to March.

Chickenpox is caused by the varicella-zoster (VZV) virus which spreads easily through respiratory droplets from coughs and sneezes of an infected person. It may also spread through contact with fluids from skin blisters. A person with chickenpox is contagious one to two days before the rash appears until all blisters have formed scabs. In rare case, indirect contact with contaminated items such as clothes may also cause infection.

Chickenpox symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, loss of appetite, and blister-like rash that causes severe itching. The rash appears first on the face, chest and back, then spread over the entire body including mucosa. It usually takes about one week for all the blisters to become scabs and normally leave no scar. Infection in adolescents and adults is usually more severe than infection in children.

The Department of Disease Control advises people to protect themselves well and wash hands often when caring for the patient. Home care include drinking plenty of fluid to avoid dehydration, taking paracetamol to relief fever and pain, cutting the patient's nails, bathe in cool water and pat the skin dry (don't rub), and dress in loose clothes, etc. Ask the pharmacist also about using cooling creams or gels or antihistamine medicine to help relief itching and prevent scratching. Once infected, the person will develop life-long immunity.

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



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