

Department of Disease Control

Weekly Disease Forecast No.165_Leptospirosis

(24 – 30 June 2018)

From the national disease surveillance system, the Department of Disease Control revealed 845 leptospirosis patients (6 died) during 1 January to 18 June 2018. Occupations with the highest incidence rates were agriculture (45.7%), followed by general laborer job (20.8%). By age group, the highest incidence rates were found in age groups 55-64 years, 45-54 years and 35-44 years respectively.

Provinces with the top ten leptospirosis incidence were Sisaket, Phangnga, Trang, Yala, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Loei, Phatthalung, Yasothon, Kalasin and Surat Thani respectively.



This weekly disease forecast has projected that due to heavy rains and floods in many areas, the risk of leptospirosis infection is likely to continue.

Leptospirosis is caused by bacteria (Leptospire) in urine of animals, especially rats. The bacteria can be found also in urine of cattle, pigs and dogs. The risk of acquiring leptospirosis is by working in wet land (e.g. rice field), wading (e.g. in flood areas where the water level has decreased), or swimming in water that might be contaminated with animals' urine. The bacteria can enter the body through skin with superficial cuts and open wounds or mucosa of mouth, eyes and nose and perhaps through waterlogged skin.

The Department of Disease Control therefore encourages people, especially those with wounds on skins of legs and arms, to avoid exposure to potentially contaminated environment. People who have to wade in flood water, walk in wet soil or clean houses after the floods should cover their wounds and abrasions with waterproof bandages, wear rubber boots or other protective footwear and wash hands and feet immediately right after the exposure. Taking a thorough shower is very helpful.

If symptoms occur within 1-2 weeks after exposure, including high fever, chills, muscle aches (most notable in the calf and lumbar areas), red eyes, and jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), the patients should go to the hospitals nearby for prompt and life saving treatment. Informing the doctors of history of water exposure is very useful. In severe cases, delay in seeking medical attention might end up with complications such as renal failure, pulmonary haemorrhage or myocarditis or even death.

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



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