

Department of Disease Control Weekly Disease Forecast No.185_Influenza (4 - 11 November 2018)

From the national disease surveillance system, the Department of Disease Control (DDC) reveals that this year up to the present there were 141,044 influenza patients of which 28 died. The highest incidence rates were found in 25 - 34 years and 35 - 44 years age groups respectively. Influenza incidence were higher in the Central, Northern, and Northeastern regions respectively. The disease peak period with the highest numbers of patients were in August and September.

Influenza outbreaks occurred mostly in crowded places especially prisons and educational institutions.



According to this week disease forecast, the occurrence of influenza will continue during this cold season especially in mountainous areas.

Influenza, or flu, is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. The viruses are mainly spread person to person by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. Influenza may also spread when people share eating or drinking utensils as well as when they touch surfaces with infected droplets and then touch their mouth, eyes, or nose. Therefore, prevention of the disease can be done by avoiding close contact with those with influenza-like illness (ILI), avoiding sharing utensils and washing hands often. People with ILI, i.e. fever, sore throat, cough, stuffy or runny nose and muscle aches should stay home and be isolated to prevent spreading of influenza viruses to others. They should wear face masks, or cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, and wash hands often.

Patients with severe illness or those who take medicines to relieve influenza illness but symptoms do not improve within 2 - 3 days, a hospital medical care is immediately needed.

Department of Disease Control advises people to protect themselves and their family members who are at risk of having severe influenza illness well from the disease. The at risk groups include young children under 2 years old, pregnant women, people older than 65 years, people with underlying chronic diseases such as COPD, asthma, diabetes, heart, kidney, and liver diseases, Thalassemia, and people with impaired immunity. These at risk people should get the annual influenza vaccine to protect them from the disease and to reduce the disease severity. Health care personnel should also receive the annual vaccination.

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



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