

Department of Disease Control Weekly Disease Forecast No.191_Pertussis (30 December 2018 – 5 January 2019)

From the national disease surveillance system, during 1 January – 21 December 2018, there were 167 pertussis patients (3 died). The disease incidence rates have been continuously increasing during 2010 to 2018.

The total pertussis cases of this year is more than twice compared to that of last year (in 2017, there were 77 cases, 2 died). The number of cases during March to December is also higher than the median of the past five years.



This week disease forecast shows a continue risk of sporadic pertussis occurrence. Pertussis, or whooping cough, is an acute respiratory infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis*. Pertussis is easily transmitted through droplet contact from coughing and sneezing. The most at risk of getting the infection is the unimmunized or incompletely immunized young children (infants to 4 years old). The Department of Disease therefore strongly advises parents to bring their children to receive the complete DTP immunization course at the public hospital nearby at the age of 2, 4, 6, and 18 months. The booster dose for 4 years old children is also crucial.

The disease investigation had shown that young children also caught the disease from the household members who have mild pertussis. Therefore, any person with mild symptoms such as coughing or sneezing should not stay close to young children and should always wear a face mask. Moreover, young children should not be brought to crowded places.

Pertussis initial symptoms are similar to those of common cold including low-grade fever, runny nose, sneezing, and coughing. The following characteristic symptoms are numerous rapid cough (5 to 10 coughing at a time) and high-pitched whoop (wheezing sound made when a person gasps for breath after a severe coughing). A medical care at the hospital is crucially needed for life saving.

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

