

# Department of Disease Control

## Weekly Disease Forecast No.200\_Influenza

### (3 – 9 March 2019)

This year up to 28 February 2019, the Department of Disease Control reveals that there were 37 influenza clusters. The outbreaks were mostly occurred in crowded places including schools (25), prisons (4), and hospitals (3). The Influenza Type B viruses were predominantly found.

From the Time Series Forecasting, the number of influenza cases of this year will be higher compared to last year. Although the case number will be decreasing during March to April, it will be increasing during the rainy season (May to September).



According to this week disease forecast, the occurrence of influenza is likely to continue due to the weather variability.

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. People with flu-like illness (fever, sore throat, cough, stuffy or runny nose, and muscle aches) should be absent for home care, avoid close contact to and sharing utensils with others to prevent spreading of influenza viruses. They should wear face masks, or cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, and wash hands often.

During the flu season (rainy and cold seasons), the DDC encourages crowded places such as schools and prisons, to run screenings for influenza. People with flu-like illness should be isolated and maintain strict personal hygiene. Frequent cleansing of sharing spaces especially touching surfaces such as door knobs that might be contaminated with the viruses is helpful. Hand-washing facilities with soap or alcohol hand sanitizer, and face masks should be provided.

The DDC strongly advises people at risk of having severe influenza illness to get the annual influenza vaccine to protect them from the disease and to reduce the disease severity.

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



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