

# REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

December 15 - 21, 2022

## WEEKLY EVENTS

- Dr. Cynthia Maung, a Magsaysay Award winner and the founder of the Mae Tao Clinic in Mae Sot, Tak Province, has provided medical services for over 30 years to immigrants, displaced people, stateless people and ethnic groups along the Thai-Myanmar border who have no access to the country's public health system. Her status as a stateless temporary resident makes it inconvenient for her to travel outside the area to follow up and take care of patients and improve health services. Each time she leaves the area, she must request and obtain documented permission from the local officials. Dr. Cynthia is reportedly in the process of obtaining Thai nationality, which requires coordination with the Ministry of Interior and assistance from many sectors.
- Ubon Ratchathani will organize activities to promote tourism and health development from January 14 - 16, 2023 and will feature the beautiful scenery of Champasak Subdistrict at the Chong Mek border checkpoint, Sirindhorn District. Students and teachers from Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Champasak University, Champasak Technical College and the Southern Financial College (Lao PDR) are collaborating to develop the work experience of students studying Sports Science, Tourism and Hospitality, Management and International Business. These activities also aim to strengthen the relationship between the countries.

## CHOLERA OUTBREAK WARNING

Cholera is a bacterial disease that is spread through contaminated food and water. It is an important public health problem in Thailand because it affects the reputation of safe travel and hygienic food exports. From January 1 to December 16, 2022 there were five cases of cholera reported. Two of these cases were reported in December 2022, of which one was a fatal case. During holiday celebrations there are large gatherings of people and increased travel to other places. Inadequately managed sanitation systems and consumption of unhygienic food are risk factors that can facilitate the spread of diseases like cholera, especially during a holiday period.

If the symptoms of the disease are mild, they will likely disappear within 1-5 days. Mild symptoms include watery diarrhea several times a day. Adults may experience abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting. For those with severe symptoms, the diarrhea has an appearance similar to that of rice water, with a fishy smell. Patients report defecating without abdominal pain, defecating without conscious control, and vomiting. Symptoms often disappear between 1-6 days if adequate water and electrolyte replenishment are received. Severe symptoms can be life-threatening such as severe dehydration, fatigue, little or no urination, fainting, and shock.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Public health officials, migrant health volunteers and local organizations should publicize to their communities about the causes of cholera, symptoms, and prevention methods. Maintaining proper food and water hygiene is crucial and people should choose to eat fresh, clean, and fully-cooked food. Everyone should wash their hands with soap and water before and after eating as well as every time after using the toilet. People should adhere to the principles of "eating cooked food, using serving spoons, and washing hands." Restaurants and food service staff should be included in the risk communication efforts to maintain strict food quality and cleanliness standards for their customers and reducing the risk of cholera spread.



## INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

Multisectoral Capacity Development Program for Public Health Emergency Detection and Response in Border Areas

Office of International Cooperation, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand  
Supported by the Thailand MOPH - US CDC Collaboration on Public Health

### CONTACT

oicddc@gmail.com  
02-5903832  
www.ddc.go.th/oic

## Sources

- <https://pr.moph.go.th/?url=pr/detail/2/02/182780/>
- <https://prachatai.com/journal/2022/12/101915>
- <https://www.si.mahidol.ac.th/sidoctor/e-pl/articledetail.asp?id=3>
- <https://www.facebook.com/751223604962855/posts/pfbid0E6QWwVkdcdZGE1FYNmLRubGrcYkeCQdGcM88ohWqUpVxaak9TzgEWTTTQuow18xZI/?mibextid=Nif5oz>
- <https://adaymagazine.com/cynthia-muang-mae-tao-clinic/>
- Image courtesy of: <https://mgronline.com/local/detail/9580000112494>