

REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

November 2 - 8, 2023

WEEKLY EVENTS

- The Department of Medical Services has deployed a medical team comprising healthcare professionals from various hospitals and institutes under its jurisdiction to provide health care to Thai monks and Buddhists traveling on pilgrimages to India. The medical team was assigned to provide care for and treat patients at the medical facilities at Thai temples in India during the Buddhist pilgrimage season. The medical team, consisting of doctors, nurses, and pharmacists from various hospitals and institutes under the Ministry of Public Health, will be providing services from November 2, 2023 to February 16, 2024.
- On November 9, 2023, the Department of Disease Control issued a warning to the public not to believe advertisements claiming that certain dietary supplements can increase CD4 cells in individuals infected with HIV and treat HIV infection. This caution is due to the lack of medical evidence to support such claims. The treatment of HIV infection must be conducted under the care of a medical professional, involving antiretroviral medications and other specific medical care. Both aspects are crucial for the best outcomes in HIV-infected individuals. All Thai citizens can undergo HIV testing twice a year at national health insurance hospitals free of charge. Treatment is provided free of charge, covering all treatment rights. This is considered essential for those at risk to undergo testing to know their infection status, enter the treatment process quickly following medical standards, leading to a better quality of life and the ability to live normally moving forward.

PERTUSSIS IS DANGEROUS, BUT CAN BE PREVENTED WITH A VACCINE.

From the Week 44 disease surveillance report of the Department of Disease Control, covering the period from October 30 to November 5, 2023, there were seven suspected cases of pertussis in Pattani province and five cases in Narathiwat province. The ages of the affected individuals ranged from 18 days to nine years. There was one fatal case in Pattani. Most of the patients had no history of vaccination or incomplete vaccination history. Further disease investigation is underway. Epidemiological surveillance data as of October 31, 2023, indicated an increasing trend in reported pertussis cases. In 2023, there were three times as many reported cases when compared than those in 2022. The majority of cases were under 1 year old. Provinces with the highest reported cases were Pattani, Narathiwat, and Trang, respectively.

In Pattani, DTP3 vaccination coverage in 2023 is only 53%, which is below the standard (90%), posing a risk for outbreaks. Since pertussis is a vaccine-preventable disease, parents are encouraged to ensure their children receive vaccinations according to the schedule in the health record book to complete the full course. If international migrant workers who bring their families and children to work in Thailand have children under seven years old, they can purchase health insurance cards from the Ministry of Public Health for 365 baht per person. The coverage lasts for one year from the date of purchase, during which they will receive the same vaccinations as Thai children. They can receive basic vaccinations at nearby public health service facilities to keep their children safe from vaccine-preventable diseases.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Health agencies and local authorities are collaborating to provide information about pertussis and vaccine-preventable diseases. They aim to raise awareness about the causes, symptoms, modes of transmission, and disease prevention methods for the local population, especially families with children. Public relations campaigns should be conducted periodically to emphasize the importance of bringing children for vaccination. Guidance should also be provided to migrant workers in the area regarding the purchase of health insurance cards to ensure their children receive complete vaccination courses at nearby public health service facilities. This is crucial to reduce the risk of disease and preventing the severity and complications associated with vaccine-preventable diseases.

INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

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

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