

REPORT DISEASE AND HEALTH HAZARD NEWS OF INTEREST ALONG THE BORDER

December 28, 2023 - January 3, 2024

WATCH OUT FOR THESE DISEASES IN 2024

WEEKLY EVENTS

- On December 28, 2023, at the Amari Don Muang Airport Hotel, the Department of Disease Control, in collaboration with the Thai Red Cross Society and NECTEC, hosted a meeting that included the network of provincial officers responsible for migrant health in Samut Sakhon, Tak, Chonburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan, and Bangkok. A total of 80 people gathered to summarize the results of implementing the iris and facial recognition technology to accurately confirm identities using biometric data. This technology can be utilized in public health services and assisting migrant workers. This project received support from the World Health Organization, Thailand, and was operated by the Department of Disease Control, in collaboration with the Thai Red Cross Society and NECTEC, as well as participating public health agencies and hospitals. Officials and stakeholders were satisfied with the project's implementation. From July to December 2023, the program covered 8,619 migrants, with 80% being Myanmar nationals. There are plans to expand the project, increasing coverage for public health services and hospitals. The program made it convenient for migrants to seek health services, such as vaccination and health screenings. The system can also be used in conjunction with health check-ups for the registration of migrants.

On December 27, 2023, the National Communicable Disease Committee held its 7th meeting of 2023 and reported on the communicable disease situation, raising caution for communicable diseases with the potential to spread in 2024 under two categories: respiratory tract infectious diseases and vector-borne infectious diseases. The respiratory tract infectious diseases include COVID-19 and corresponding measures focus on prevention in the high-risk group of "608" individuals. It is recommended that this high-risk group receive the annual vaccine to reduce the severity and complications, particularly severe pneumonia. It is advised to perform an antigen test kit (ATK) when experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19. If the test result is positive, immediate medical attention is recommended. Wearing a face mask is recommended when in close contact with young children and high-risk groups. Another disease to cautious of is influenza, and the recommendation is for the general public to receive the annual vaccine. It is important to note that the age group eligible for vaccination includes children aged 6 months to 5 years.

Three vector-borne diseases to watch out for are dengue, Zika, and chikungunya, which are all transmitted by mosquitoes. It is suggested to minimize exposure to high-risk areas. If people have symptoms related to these diseases, consult a doctor for immediate treatment. Currently, there are antiviral drugs available for patients with weakened immunity or those at risk of severe disease. Regarding the ongoing outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases in the border areas of the southern provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat, and Yala, there is an accelerated vaccination program for children aged 6 weeks to less than 7 years who have not yet received or have not completed the required vaccinations. Pregnant women are also advised to receive the vaccine to transfer immunity to the fetus during pregnancy.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICIALS

Public health officials should disseminate information to residents about the diseases to watch out for in 2024, namely COVID-19, influenza, dengue, Zika, and chikungunya. Relevant agencies should emphasize communication and public relations to inform residents about the causes of these diseases, stress the importance of observing early symptoms, self-protection measures, and preventing the spread of the infection to others. Preventive measures, such as getting vaccinated against COVID-19 and influenza, practicing proper hygiene, and avoiding close contact with mosquitoes, should be highlighted. Agencies involved, along with the community, should collaborate to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds, protect themselves from mosquito bites, and avoid self-medication if experiencing symptoms related to these diseases. Seeking prompt medical attention is advised to reduce the risk of illness from these five diseases.

INFORMATION COLLECTED AND ANALYZED BY

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

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Sources

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