



Novel Coronavirus 2019 Pneumonia News release

by Emergency Operation Center, Department of Disease Control

Ministry of Public Health Reports that Group of Experts Confirm Five Additional Cases and Invites People to Carry Surgical Masks to Protect Themselves

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) reports that a group of experts in emerging infectious diseases in three areas confirmed five new cases caused by novel coronavirus 2019 (2019-nCoV) including four cases among Chinese and one case in a Thai citizen. They emphasize all people to wear a mask to protect themselves from any respiratory diseases.

This afternoon (31 January 2020) at the Ministry of Public Health, Dr. Sukhum Kanchanaphimai, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health and Dr. Suwannachai Wattana Yingcharoenchai, Director-General of the Department of Disease Control held a press release following the conclusion from a group of experts in emerging infectious diseases in three areas (clinical management, epidemiology, and laboratory). Thailand confirmed five new cases of 2019-nCoV, resulting in a total of 19 confirmed cases. Currently, seven people have already returned home and the others remain admitted at hospitals for treatment.

The new confirmed cases are four Chinese males with a history of traveling from Wuhan, Hubei province, China and one Thai taxi driver, which is the first case in Thailand with no recent history of travel to China. Due to the Ministry of Public Health's expanded surveillance and health screening conducted for people who have close exposure to Chinese people, the MOPH was able to detect this case. The joint investigation team conducted active case finding in a group at high risk of infection among all close contacts. The preliminary results of the laboratory tests were negative for 2019-nCoV.

Dr. Sukhum also stated that there are more confirmed cases of local transmission in many countries including the United States, Japan, and Taiwan. For Thailand, the identified confirmed cases reflect that Thailand has an effective implementation on disease surveillance. The disease surveillance is flexible and ready to be applied along with the updated situation so that more cases can be detected and to further control the transmission of disease promptly. In addition, according to the assessment from the experts, the level that Thai people are at-risk for becoming infected with 2019-nCoV is still low. However, Thailand will not let its guard down. Strict surveillance continues to be implemented and the public is recommended to protect themselves from the disease by avoiding to visit crowded places and avoiding contact with people who are coughing and sneezing. Above all, Thailand encourages people to bring a mask when going outside of their residences, and frequently wash hands with soap and water or alcohol gel. If anyone has symptoms including coughing, sneezing, sore throat and runny nose, please wear a mask and seek medical treatment at the hospital immediately.

For public transportation drivers and passengers, please ensure sanitation for yourself by wearing a mask and washing your hands often with water and soap or alcohol gel. Always clean your vehicle when not in service. If you find passengers with abnormal coughing and sneezing, please ask passengers to wear masks and provide alcohol gel in the places to those passengers.

For further information, please call the DDC Hotline 1422 or visit the DDC website at <https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/intro.php> or Line@ / Facebook Page: ู้กัันทัันโรค or กรมควบคุมโรค