

## **Ministry of Public Health**

### **Public Health Advice No. 5 Subject: Outbreaks of Influenza A(H1N1)**

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The situation of influenza A(H1N1) pandemic as of 11 May 2009, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), has shown that 4,694 cases including 48 deaths (Mexico, 45; the United States, 2; and Canada, 1) were reported from 30 countries. An individual with fever or unwell condition is advised to postpone his/her travel until he/she gets well. Travellers from foreign countries, in case of having fever, should seek medical care immediately. These practices will considerably help curb the spread of communicable diseases, including influenza.

WHO's most recent report shows that the influenza A(H1N1) cases – especially those detected outside Mexico – tend to be less severe than those seen in the initial phase of the epidemic. Many cases need not be hospitalized. Moreover, three deaths in the United States and Canada, in fact, had underlying chronic diseases such as heart diseases, etc.

Today (12 May 2009) the Ministry of Public Health announces identification of two laboratory confirmed cases of influenza A(H1N1) in Thailand. The two cases were infected in Mexico, developed fever after arrival in Thailand and had mild symptoms. They had been treated with a complete course of antiviral drugs and had completely recovered. Individuals in close contact with the patients were treated with a complete course of antiviral drugs and were followed up daily and none of them fell ill. They can now safely join any activities with other people.

As the two cases were detected and promptly treated right after their arrival in Thailand, the disease was contained quickly enough to prevent spreading in the country. Thus the country's level of risk remains similar to the past two weeks. All concerned authorities, however, must not underestimate the situation and should maintain the full alert level on disease surveillance and control.

Thailand, under the National Strategic Plan for Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza and Preparedness for Pandemic Influenza, has been working continuously with multi-sector partners on preparedness planning for several years. Based on the existing preparedness, the Ministry of Public Health is now intensifying surveillance, patient care, and risk communication in order to ensure effective prevention and control of the emerging influenza A(H1N1).

However, understanding and involvement of all sectors and all individuals is the primary key of success in diseases surveillance, control and mitigation. The Ministry of Public Health thus reiterates its advice for the public, village health volunteers, and educational institutions to seek cooperation in influenza A(H1N1) prevention as follows:

#### **Advice for general public**

- Maintain good health by having an adequate rest, regularly taking exercise, and eating nutritious food.

- Foster health habits for disease prevention by eating freshly cooked food, using serving spoons, washing hands often, and wearing a face mask whenever coughing.
- Persons who have just come from foreign countries, in case of having influenza-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, and muscle aches) are strongly advised to see a doctor.
- In case of having an acquaintance who has just returned from a foreign country and has influenza-like symptoms within seven days of arrival, advise him/her to see a doctor or health official.

**Advice for village health volunteers**

- Keep close watch for influenza-like illness in the community. If such illness is seen, especially in one who has just returned from a foreign country within seven days, advise him/her to see a doctor and report to the local health authority.
- Disseminate the knowledge about influenza A(H1N1) and give advice on health promotion and disease prevention according to the guidelines given by the Ministry of Public Health.

**Advice for educational institutions**

- On opening of new semester, it is advisable that schools and educational institutions carry out a daily check of attendance and watch for sick students. They should also encourage health promotion and disease prevention among students. In addition, educational institutions are advised to provide proper facilities for disease prevention according to the guidelines given by the Ministry of Public Health (Public Health Advice No. 4).

For more information, please visit the Ministry of Public Health's website: [www.moph.go.th](http://www.moph.go.th), and for questions, call the Department of Disease Control's Operation Centre at 0 2590 3333 or MOPH's Hotline Centre at 0 2590 1994 around the clock.

Ministry of Public Health, Thailand  
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