

Department of Disease Control

Weekly Disease Forecast No.100_Melioidosis

(20 – 26 March 2017)

During 1 January – 14 March 2017, according to the national disease surveillance system, there were 677 melioidosis cases. About half of the patients were farmers. The highest melioidosis incidence rates were in age groups 45 - 54 years followed by 55 – 64 years and 65 years and over respectively. Among the 9 deaths, 4 each were from the southern and the northeastern regions and 1 was from the northern region.

In 2016, there were 3,108 melioidosis cases with 9 deaths. The disease was mostly found in adults during the rainy season.



According to this week disease forecast, there is a continue risk of melioidosis especially in the southern region where cases and deaths have increased since the end of last year during the long period of rainfalls and floods.

The disease is endemic in Southeast Asia, northern Australia and South Asia. Transmission mostly occurs by percutaneous inoculation of the bacteria *Burkholderia pseudomallei* found in muddy soil or surface water. Other modes, i.e. ingestion and inhalation are less frequent. Symptoms include fever, skin ulcers or pustules. Some cases have multifocal infection with abscesses in many organs, i.e. lung, liver, and spleen with septicemia. Some patients develop chronic illness mimicking many other diseases including tuberculosis. Those with underlying diseases, e.g. diabetes, alcohol excess, chronic lung disease, renal disease, thalassemia, malignancies, patients under steroid therapy and tuberculosis, are at risk of severe illness and fatalities. Patients with fever lasting more than 5 days in spite of antipyretics, chronic ulcers or multiple pustules, seeking medical treatment is crucial.



In endemic areas, minimizing exposure to wet soil and surface water should be done by wearing boots and gloves. People with high risk of severe melioidosis should be more cautious to avoid risky exposure to wet soil, unsafe drinking water and semi-cooked meat.

For queries or additional information, please call DDC hotline 1422.



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