

Department of Disease Control
Weekly Disease Forecast No. 89_ CO Poisoning from Gas Water Heater
(26 December 2016 – 1 January 2017)

From the national disease surveillance system, there were 16 incidents of Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning from sub-standard gas water heaters in 9 years (2008 – 2016). Among the 27 victims aged 2 – 54 years, 6 died.

The incidents usually occurred during December to January and were found in resorts, hotels and other accommodations. There were 3 incidents in 2016 that resulted in 4 victims with no death.



According to this week disease forecast, during this cold season, many tourists are travelling to visit mountainous areas and stay in hotels and resorts installed with sub-standard gas water heaters. These people are at risk of confronting CO poisoning.

The Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, therefore advises all individuals, especially people with chronic diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, anemia, respiratory diseases or breathing problems, to protect themselves well from CO poisoning when using a shower room with gas water heater. If there is no ventilation fan, the door should be semi-open for good air flow.

If symptoms, i.e. feeling dizzy, light headed, nauseous, chest pain or difficulty breathing, he or she must get out of the bathroom immediately. The EMS hotline 1669 should be called for help.

After the patient get out of the room, the bathroom door should be left open for at least 15 minutes. There is also an urgent need to call a qualified technician to check and fix the heater before next use. Only standard gas water heaters should be equipped and routinely checked.

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

