



JOINT PRESS RELEASE BETWEEN
THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH
KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA AND
THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)



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Three New Human Cases of Avian Influenza H5N1 in Cambodia in 2013

The Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Kingdom of Cambodia wishes to advise members of the public that three new human cases of avian influenza have been confirmed positive for the H5N1 virus.

The first case, an 8-month old infant boy from Chrey Korng Village, Sangkat Chorm Chao, Khan Por Sen Chey, Phnom Penh has been diagnosed with H5N1 influenza. He developed symptoms on 08th January 2013 then was brought to the National Paediatric Hospital for consultation on 9th January with fever, cough, runny nose, and vomiting. The boy was registered in the Influenza-Like Illness Sentinel Surveillance and the samples were sent to the National Institute of Public Health's laboratory on 11th January. The result was confirmed by Institut Pasteur du Cambodge on 22nd January 2013. The infant has recovered and had history of coming into contact with poultry prior to becoming sick.

The second case, a 15-year-old female from Snao village, Snao commune, Prey Kabass district, Takeo Province, has been diagnosed with H5N1 influenza on 22nd January 2013. She became sick on 11th January suffering with fever and cough. She was initially treated by local private practitioners. Her condition worsened and she was admitted to Kantha Bopha Hospital on 17th January with fever and shortness of breath. Unfortunately, despite intensive medical care, she died on 21st January. There is evidence of recent deaths among poultry in the village and the patient prepared sick chicken for food prior to becoming sick.

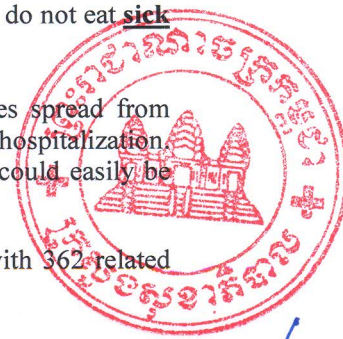
In the third case, a 35-year-old man from Trapeang Sla village, Preah Nipean commune, Kong Pisey district, Kampong Speu province has been diagnosed with H5N1 influenza on 23rd January 2013 by Institut Pasteur du Cambodge. He became sick on 13th January, 2013 suffering with fever and cough. He was initially treated by local private practitioners. His condition worsened and he was admitted to the Khmer-Soviet Friendship Hospital in Phnom Penh with fever and dyspnea on 21st January. Samples were taken the same day and sent to the National Institute of Public Health's laboratory. Despite intensive medical care, the patient died soon after the samples were taken. There is evidence of recent deaths among poultry in the village and the patient prepared sick chicken for food prior to becoming sick. The man is the twenty-fourth person in Cambodia to become infected with H5N1 virus, and the third person this year and the twenty-first person to die from complications of the disease. Of all the twenty four cases, 15 were children under 14, and fifteen of the twenty four confirmed cases occurred in females.

"Avian influenza H5N1 is still a threat to the health of Cambodians. This is the three cases of H5N1 infection in human this year, and children still seem to be most vulnerable. I urge parents and guardians to keep children away from sick or dead poultry, discourage them from playing in areas where poultry stay and wash their hands often. If they have fast or difficulty breathing, they should be brought to medical attention at the nearest health facilities and attending physicians be made aware of any exposure to sick or dead poultry." said HE Mam Bunheng, Minister of Health.


The Ministry of Health's Rapid Response Teams (RRT) have gone to the hospitals and the field to identify the patient's close contacts, any epidemiological linkage among the three cases and initiate preventive treatment as required. In addition, public health education campaigns are being conducted in the villages to inform families on how to protect themselves from contracting avian influenza. The government's message is - wash hands often; keep children away from poultry; keep poultry away from living areas; do not eat ~~sick~~ poultry; and all poultry eaten should be well cooked.

H5N1 influenza is a flu that normally spreads between sick poultry, but it can sometimes spread from poultry to humans. Human H5N1 Avian Influenza is a very serious disease that requires hospitalization. Although the virus currently does not easily spread among humans, if the virus changes it could easily be spread like seasonal influenza. Hence, early recognition of cases is important.

Globally since 2003, there have been 613 laboratory confirmed cases of avian influenza with 362 related deaths.



The Ministry of Health will continue to keep the public informed of developments via the MoH website www.cdcmoh.gov.kh where relevant health education materials can also be downloaded.

For more information on human influenza please call the MoH Influenza Hotline numbers: **115 (free call); 012 488 981 or 089 669 567** 

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