

Chikungunya Fever in South-East Asia

10 Jun 2009

In recent years, countries in South-East Asia have been severely affected by outbreaks of Chikungunya fever. India was hit in 2006 after a quiescence of 32 years, following the re-emergence in Kenya in 2004 and the spread in the Indian Ocean islands in 2005. Indonesia, Maldives, and Sri Lanka have also been affected by Chikungunya. In 2008, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Indonesia reported outbreaks.

THAILAND

In Thailand, in 2009, a large outbreak has affected mainly the southern region, some of the areas being touristic destinations. A total of 24,029 cases have been notified from 1 Jan - 2 June in 36 provinces (no deaths are currently reported). The most affected areas are the southern provinces: Songkha (reporting 36.3% of the cases), Narathiwat (28.6%), Pattani (14.2%) and Yala (8.6%) [1]. The first cases in Phuket were reported in March-April. From May 1 to 2 June, a total of 5,741 cases were notified; for nine provinces, it concerned the first reported cases of this year.

Chikungunya infection seems to quickly be spreading from the southern provinces to the upper parts of the country. Some confirmed cases are now reported in provinces in Middle, North and North-East of Thailand (see map).

MALAYSIA

A total of 2,504 cases have been reported in Malaysia from the beginning of the year 2009 to May 30. Kedah is the most affected province (reporting 27.3% of the cases), then Selangor, Kelantan, Perak and Sarawak. In week 21 (24-30 May), 475 cases have been reported, mostly from the Northern provinces: Kedah (reporting 48.2% of the cases) and Penang (17.6%). The week before (week 20) 475 cases have been notified, mostly for Kedah province (87.8%) [2].

SINGAPORE

In Singapore, since the beginning of the year up to week 21 (May 30), 275 cases have been notified including 28 imported cases and 247 cases following autochthonous transmission (three of whom occurred in week 21) [3]. In March 2009, one case of Chikungunya infection was identified in a French patient returning from a short trip to Singapore.

REFERENCES

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[3] Ministry of Health Singapore. Weekly infectious disease bulletin. Epidemiological week 21, 24-30 May 2009. Available from: http://www.moh.gov.sg/mohcorp/uploadedFiles/Statistics/Infectious_Diseases_Bulletin/2009/2009_week_21.pdf

Distribution of Chikungunya cases, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia, from 01/01/09 to 02/06/09 (Data source: National Ministries of Health)

