

Clarifications of Misconceptions Regarding Vaccine Injury Compensation Program in Taiwan

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Abstract

The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) in Taiwan has been in operation for more than 30 years since 1988. However, healthcare professionals and first-line public health personnel have limited knowledge regarding definitions of adverse events, adverse reactions and side effects, as well as the application criteria and procedure.

Adverse events following immunization are any untoward medical occurrence after immunization, regardless of a causal relationship with the usage of the vaccine. The purpose of surveillance of these events is to evaluate vaccine safety continuously. On the other hand, the purposes of VICP are to provide timely compensation for vaccination-related injured individuals based on reviews by expert committee, to reduce pressure on healthcare professionals while performing immunization, and to allocate the responsibility of non-fault compensation to the government.

Eligible claimants of VICP are alleged victims suffered from injuries related to vaccination or maternal immunization, or legal heirs of the deceased victim. The scope of vaccination covers qualified vaccines by testing or document review, with official permit or special approval for importation. Conditions such as self-paid vaccination, off-label use, injuries incurred by others' negligence, having received compensation for the same basis and fact, and post-exposure prophylaxis vaccination do not influence the

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Received: Nov. 13, 2019

Accepted: Nov. 29, 2019

DOI: 10.6525/TEB.202011_36(21).0001

eligibility of VICP application. Situations of declined compensation include injuries unrelated to vaccination, common, mild and expected adverse reactions, injuries due to conversion disorder or other psychological factors, and injuries related to use of vaccines not for immunization purpose.

Cooperation and implementation by healthcare professional and first-line public health personnel are essential to fulfill the purposes of VICP. Sustaining communication and promotion by the central competent authorities are needed to maximize the effects of the program.

Keywords: Adverse events follow immunization, vaccine injury compensation program, vaccine safety, causality

week 43–44(Oct. 18–Oct. 31, 2020)

DOI: 10.6525/TEB.202011_36(21).0002

Weekly Data of Notifiable Infectious Diseases (by week of diagnosis)

Case diagnosis year		Week 43★		Week 1-43			
Classification	Disease Diagnosed	2020	2019	2020		2019	
				Total cases★	Imported cases	Total cases★	Imported cases
Category I	Plague	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rabies	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SARS	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Smallpox	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category II	Acute Flaccid Paralysis	0	0	25	0	53	1
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type A	2	2	70	8	78	20
	Amoebiasis	6	8	207	113	277	154
	Anthrax	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Chikungunya Fever	0	4	3	3	104	83
	Cholera	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Dengue Fever	1	13	132	65	547	448
	Diphtheria	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Enterohemorrhagic E. coli Infection	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Epidemic Typhus Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome	0	0	10	0	1	0
	Malaria	0	0	1	1	6	6
	Measles	0	0	2	2	133	53
	Meningococcal Meningitis	0	1	6	0	5	0
	Paratyphoid Fever	0	0	0	0	7	6
	Poliomyelitis	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rubella	0	0	0	0	21	17
Shigellosis	2	6	128	21	117	38	
Typhoid fever	0	0	7	3	23	19	
West Nile Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Zika virus infection	0	0	2	2	4	4	
Category III	Acute Viral Hepatitis type B	2	1	88	2	91	3
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type C	13	16	502	4	512	3
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type D	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type E	0	0	8	0	8	4
	Congenital Syphilis	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Congenital Rubella Syndrome	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Enteroviruses Infection with Severe Complications	0	5	7	0	54	1
	Haemophilus Influenza type b Infection	0	0	3	0	1	0
	Japanese Encephalitis	0	0	21	0	21	2
	Legionnaires' Disease	8	9	241	8	226	15
	Mumps	6	12	412	6	507	8
	Neonatal Tetanus	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pertussis	0	1	8	0	25	0	
Tetanus	0	0	7	0	3	0	
Category IV	Botulism	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Brucellosis	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Complicated Varicella	0	0	40	0	54	1
	Endemic Typhus Fever	0	1	18	0	25	3
	Herpesvirus B Infection	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Influenza Case with Severe Complications	0	32	548	6	1935	8
	Invasive Pneumococcal Disease	5	4	206	0	354	2
	Leptospirosis	2	2	73	0	105	1
	Listeriosis	0	5	114	0	156	1
	Lyme Disease	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Melioidosis	0	2	16	1	43	1
	Q Fever	0	1	12	0	22	5
	Scrub Typhus	7	14	341	1	395	4
Toxoplasmosis	0	0	11	0	13	2	
Tularemia	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Category V	Ebola Virus Disease	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Lassa Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Marburg Hemorrhagic Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Middle East Respiratory Syndrome	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Coronavirus Infections	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Novel Influenza A Virus Infections	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rift Valley Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens	15	-	550	495	-	-	
Yellow Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	

- ★The weekly and cumulative total numbers include indigenous and imported cases of notifiable infectious diseases.
- MDR-TB, Tuberculosis, Syphilis, Gonorrhoea, HIV Infection, AIDS, Hansen's Disease and Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease are excluded from the table.
- Numbers of mumps and tetanus cases are summed up by the week of report.
- Since 2020/1/15, "Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens" was listed as a Notifiable Infectious Disease.

Suspected Clusters

- Thirty-six clusters related to diarrhea (18), tuberculosis (11), varicella (4), upper respiratory tract infection (2), and influenza-like illness (1) were reported during week 43.

Imported Infectious Diseases

- There were 20 imported cases from 6 countries during week 43.

Diseases \ Countries	Philippines	Indonesia	Russia	Turkey	France	USA	Total
Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens	7	4	1	1	1	1	15
Amoebiasis	1	4					5
Total	8	8	1	1	1	1	20

- As of week 43, there were 735 imported cases from 53 countries. The top 3 countries are Indonesia (163), USA (99), and Philippines (88).
- The three notifiable diseases with the highest number of imported cases are Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens (495), Amoebiasis (113), and Dengue Fever (65).

Summary of Epidemic

- **Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens** : The COVID-19 pandemic is still critical, and risks of importation and local transmission persist.
- **Dengue Fever** : The new cases might continue to occur. The risk of infection in the community continue.
- **Influenza-like illness** : The epidemic status is expected to increase gradually because the temperature is fluctuating.
- **Enterovirus** : The epidemic status is expected to increase gradually.

Weekly Data of Notifiable Infectious Diseases (by week of diagnosis)

Case diagnosis year		Week 44★		Week 1-44			
Classification	Disease Diagnosed	2020	2019	2020		2019	
				Total cases★	Imported cases	Total cases★	Imported cases
Category I	Plague	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rabies	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SARS	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Smallpox	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category II	Acute Flaccid Paralysis	1	2	26	0	55	1
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type A	1	4	71	8	82	21
	Amoebiasis	2	15	209	114	292	164
	Anthrax	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Chikungunya Fever	0	2	3	3	106	85
	Cholera	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Dengue Fever	1	18	133	65	565	466
	Diphtheria	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Enterohemorrhagic E. coli Infection	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Epidemic Typhus Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome	1	0	11	0	1	0
	Malaria	0	0	1	1	6	6
	Measles	0	1	2	2	134	54
	Meningococcal Meningitis	0	1	6	0	6	0
	Paratyphoid Fever	0	0	0	0	7	6
	Poliomyelitis	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rubella	0	0	0	0	21	17
Shigellosis	1	2	129	21	119	39	
Typhoid fever	0	0	7	3	23	19	
West Nile Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Zika virus infection	0	0	2	2	4	4	
Category III	Acute Viral Hepatitis type B	4	2	92	2	93	3
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type C	13	6	514	4	518	3
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type D	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Acute Viral Hepatitis type E	0	0	8	0	8	4
	Congenital Syphilis	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Congenital Rubella Syndrome	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Enteroviruses Infection with Severe Complications	0	1	7	0	55	1
	Haemophilus Influenza type b Infection	0	0	3	0	1	0
	Japanese Encephalitis	0	0	21	0	21	2
	Legionnaires' Disease	5	1	246	8	227	15
	Mumps	8	10	420	6	517	8
	Neonatal Tetanus	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Pertussis	0	0	8	0	25	0
Tetanus	0	0	7	0	3	0	
Category IV	Botulism	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Brucellosis	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Complicated Varicella	0	0	40	0	54	1
	Endemic Typhus Fever	0	1	18	0	26	3
	Herpesvirus B Infection	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Influenza Case with Severe Complications	0	22	548	6	1957	8
	Invasive Pneumococcal Disease	2	11	207	0	365	2
	Leptospirosis	2	2	75	0	107	1
	Listeriosis	1	0	115	0	156	1
	Lyme Disease	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Melioidosis	0	0	16	1	43	1
	Q Fever	0	0	12	0	22	5
	Scrub Typhus	8	9	349	1	404	4
Toxoplasmosis	1	0	12	0	13	2	
Tularemia	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Category V	Ebola Virus Disease	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Lassa Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Marburg Hemorrhagic Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Middle East Respiratory Syndrome	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Coronavirus Infections	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Novel Influenza A Virus Infections	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rift Valley Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens	6	-	555	500	-	-	
Yellow Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	

1. ★The weekly and cumulative total numbers include indigenous and imported cases of notifiable infectious diseases.
2. MDR-TB, Tuberculosis, Syphilis, Gonorrhoea, HIV Infection, AIDS, Hansen's Disease and Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease are excluded from the table.
3. Numbers of mumps and tetanus cases are summed up by the week of report.
4. Since 2020/1/15, "Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens" was listed as a Notifiable Infectious Disease.

Suspected Clusters

- Thirty-seven clusters related to diarrhea (23), tuberculosis (7), upper respiratory tract infection (4), enterovirus (2), and varicella (1) were reported during week 44.

Imported Infectious Diseases

- There were 7 imported cases from 4 countries during week 44.

Diseases	Countries				Total
	Indonesia	Philippines	USA	India	
Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens	2	2	1	1	6
Amoebiasis	1				1
Total	3	2	1	1	7

- As of week 44, there were 741 imported cases from 53 countries. The top 3 countries are Indonesia (166), USA (100), and Philippines (90).
- The three notifiable diseases with the highest number of imported cases are Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens (500), Amoebiasis (114), and Dengue Fever (65).

Summary of Epidemic

- **Severe Pneumonia with Novel Pathogens** : The COVID-19 pandemic is still critical, and risks of importation and local transmission persist.
- **Dengue Fever** : The new cases might continue to occur. The risk of infection in the community continue.
- **Influenza-like illness** : The epidemic status increase gradually because the temperature is fluctuating.
- **Enterovirus** : The epidemic status increase, but still below the national baseline.

The Taiwan Epidemiology Bulletin series of publications is published by Centers for Disease Control, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Taiwan (R.O.C.) since Dec. 15, 1984.

Publisher: Jih-Haw Chou

Editor-in-Chief: Yung-Ching Lin

Executive Editor: Hsueh-Ju Chen, Hsin-Lun Lee

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Suggested Citation:

[Author].[Article title].Taiwan Epidemiol Bull 2020;36:[inclusive page numbers]. [DOI]