

KAWARABAN

Infectious Diseases

December, 2015

In this issue of Kawaraban, we will provide information related to infectious diseases such as influenza, infectious gastroenteritis (e.g. norovirus), tuberculosis, and HIV.

1) Influenza

• Symptoms

Symptoms that occur when you contract the influenza virus include fever of 38°C or higher, coughing, sore throat, headache, joint pain, and muscle pain. Influenza quickly affects your entire body. It is usually prevalent in the winter. Be aware that those with chronic diseases, infants and children, and the elderly are especially susceptible to becoming seriously ill.

• Prevention

Get sufficient food and rest, avoid crowds when going out, wash your hands and gargle thoroughly upon returning home. Being vaccinated in advance of influenza season can be effective prevention. Vaccinations can be received at hospital.

• Before going to the hospital...

When symptoms are relatively minor, examine your situation before hastily going to the hospital. If you want to be examined at a hospital, inquire about the procedures by telephone first, to avoid spreading any infectious disease.



2) Infectious Gastroenteritis

• Symptoms

These are forms of food poisoning caused by viruses. People get infected when viruses like norovirus and rotavirus enter through the mouth. Diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, fever of 38°C or higher, cold-like symptoms, etc. are observed. They are especially common in winter.

• Prevention

Infection is common from hands and cooking utensils that have the viruses on them. It is important to wash and disinfect hands, cooking utensils, and dishes when preparing food. It is also important to cook foods thoroughly.

3) Tuberculosis

• Symptoms

Tuberculosis is an infection caused by breathing in the tuberculosis bacteria, resulting in an inflammation of the lungs. Simply breathing in the bacteria does not necessarily mean that you will develop the infection. Poor nutrition and excessive strain make it easy to contract tuberculosis. The first symptoms are coughing, phlegm, lethargy, slight fever, and other cold-like symptoms. When phlegm containing the tuberculosis bacteria is discharged, people in the area are at risk of infection by airborne exposure. Last year in Miyagi Prefecture, 209 patients were newly diagnosed with tuberculosis.

• Treatment

After a tuberculosis diagnosis, the disease is usually cured by daily medication for a period of six months. When phlegm contains the tuberculosis bacteria, hospitalization is necessary. However, when

the bacteria is no longer present after treatment, hospitalization is no longer necessary. If a patient determines on their own that their symptoms have subsided, and stops taking medication, the treatment will be ineffective. It is important to follow doctor's orders and continue taking medication until the treatment is completed. There is a system in place for the costs of tuberculosis treatment to be covered partially or totally by public funds. For more information, please check with your municipal office.



• **Examination**

Participate in the health check run by your workplace or municipal office. With early identification, it is possible to ensure appropriate treatment and avoid an outbreak of the disease.

4) HIV

• **Testing**

Public Health Centers in Miyagi Prefecture and all wards of Sendai City conduct HIV testing, usually twice a month. Testing dates and times, the need for an appointment, and the timeline for results notification (same day or one to two weeks later) are different for each center. For more information, check with your desired center. Testing is anonymous and free of charge. Some of these centers also conduct testing for other diseases like chlamydia and syphilis.

Inquiry information is listed below.

Name of Institution	Phone Number
Aoba Ward Health and Safety Section	022-214-8029
Miyagino Ward Health and Safety Section	022-291-2111 Extension 6117
Wakabayashi Ward Health and Safety Section	022-282-1111 Extension 6715
Taihaku Ward Health and Safety Section	022-247-1111 Extension 6717
Izumi Ward Health and Safety Section	022-372-3111 Extension 6716
Sennan Public Health Center	0224-53-3121
Shiogama Public Health Center	022-363-5504
Shiogama Public Health Center Iwanuma Branch	0223-22-2188
Shiogama Public Health Center Kurokawa Branch	022-358-1111
Osaki Public Health Center	0229-91-0714
Kurihara Public Health Center	0228-22-2117
Tome Public Health Center	0220-22-6119
Ishinomaki Public Health Center	0225-95-1430
Kesennuma Public Health Center	0226-22-6662

For those with difficulty consulting or inquiring in Japanese:

◆ **Contact the Miyagi Support Center for Foreign Nationals at 022-275-9990**

【Available Languages and Days of Availability】

- ◇ **English, Chinese, Korean – Monday through Friday**
- ◇ **Tagalog – Wednesdays**
- ◇ **Portuguese – 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month**
- ◇ **Vietnamese – 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month**

MIA can dispatch interpreters to Public Health Centers and medical institutions. Please contact MIA for details.

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