

H7N9 bird flu: emerging of psychological problem

Gripe aviária H7N9: emergência e problemas psicológicos

Sir, emerging of H7N9 bird flu in this year (2013) is an important health problem¹. Following the emerging of this infection, there are many interesting relating psychological problem that emerge. In fact, in any previous emerging influenza, the psychological problem is very important². First, the “fear” of this disease is widespread. After its first outbreak in China, many Chinese become panic and this becomes a big psychological problem. In fact, the similar situation can be seen in many previous outbreaks of new influenza^{3,4}. Lau et al. noted for the occurrence of this problem in any new emerging influenza and proposed that “Dissemination of accurate, timely information would reduce unnecessary

distress and unwanted behaviors”³. Second, the problem of psychological problem that can relate to the treatment of the infection should be mentioned. The oseltamivir, which is the drug of choice for treatment, has many side effects including the psychological disorders. Delirium can be induced and this might be difficult to discriminate from the delirium that is caused by the infection⁵. However, Casscells et al. reported that there is no “increased the risk of adverse neuropsychiatric outcomes”⁶ in the influenza infected patients receiving oseltamivir therapy.

Joob Beuy¹, Wiwanitkit Viroj²

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¹Sanitation 1 Medical Academic Center, Bangkok Thailand;

²Wiwanitkit house, Bangkhuae, Bangkok Thailand.

Correspondence: Beuy Joob; Sanitation 1 Medical Academic Center; Bangkok 10330 Thailand; E-mail:beuyjoob@hotmail.com

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