Letter to the Editor

Novel avian-origin influenza A (H7N9) virus in the human

To the Editor,

The recent article on the novel H7N9 bird flu is very interesting.¹ As Tang and Chen mentioned, there are indeed many interesting considerations involving this new emerging infection. First, the possibility of human to human transmission of this new infection should be discussed. In fact, if human to human transmission occurs, a worldwide pandemic could soon follow. At present, arising from an epidemiological study, Nishiura et al. reported that it is not possible that there will be human to human transmission that will further lead to pandemic.²

However, as observed in the novel H7N9 structure, “several human virus-like signatures” may certainly lead to cross species infection of this new emerging zoonosis.³ The potential pandemic would likely be attributed to the expansive spreading of the pathogenic virus from infected avian. In addition, the highly mutated nature of this new virus is another point that should be promptly followed-up and investigated. The sense mutation that leads to drug resistance was already observed,⁴ which could be an origin of a serious uncontrolled novel atypical influenza. Nevertheless, the pandemic trend is still very low at present.⁵ Consequently, the medical society still has time to make the necessary preparations to fight this new global problem.

References


Viroj Wiwanitkit*
Hainan Medical University, China
Faculty of Medicine, University of Nis, Serbia
Joseph Ayobabalola University, Nigeria

*Dr. Viroj Wiwanitkit, Wiwanitkit House, Bangkhae, Bangkok 10160, Thailand.
E-mail address: wviroj@yahoo.com