

Precautions List of Risk Countries with COVID-19 for Primary Prevention: Experience on Case Traveling from the Country Out of the List

Dear Editor,

The new emerging SARSCoV2 infection-causing pandemic COVID-19 is a global public health problem at present. This disease was first reported in pneumonia patients in China^[1] before its occurrence in more than 150 countries worldwide. Some countries have a serious situation of the outbreak and already perceived as COVID-19 risk countries. The examples are China, South Korea, Iran, and Italy. The list of risk countries with COVID-19 is usually used as a component for planning for primary prevention of disease. The history of traveling from countries present in the list of risk countries with COVID-19 accompanied with fever and respiratory symptoms might be used for identifying suspicious case for disease screening.^[2] Thailand, a country in Indochina where the disease occurs second after China^[3] also implemented these criteria for screening. The efficacy of these criteria is still not proven.

Here, the authors would like to share observations from Thailand. At present (18th March 2020), Thailand has 212 COVID patients. Of these cases, there is 1 (0.47%) case that the patient has a history of immigration from aboard but not from countries present in the list of risk countries with COVID-19. In this case, the physician in-charge is wise and can recognize the possibility of infection, therefore, the final diagnosis can be derived despite the patient has no history of coming from countries present in the list of risk countries with COVID-19. In routine practice, general public health practitioners in developing countries usually follow guidelines without careful reconsideration and might result in under diagnosis of the problem. The efficacy of using criteria that include the history of traveling from countries present in the list of risk countries with COVID-19 is not 100% and should be continuously re-updated. This report can highlight the necessity of holistic screening for all immigrants without special focus only on those from countries present in the list of risk countries with COVID-19.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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