

認識漢生病的問與答-英文

About Hansen's disease: Q&A

How is Hansen's disease spread?

Ans: Hansen's disease is mainly spread through prolonged close contact with patients suffering from Hansen's disease. People may also be infected via the nasal secretion containing the pathogen in the nasal cavity and upper airway mucosa.

Can Hansen's disease be cured? What should the patients pay attention to during the treatment?

Ans: Hansen's disease can be cured with medicine. If Hansen's disease patients take medicine according to their doctor's prescription, Hansen's disease can be cured. After taking the medicine, the patients will not be contagious, but should not discontinue medication during the treatment. If the patients feel uncomfortable when taking the medicine, they should inform their doctor. They may discontinue medication with their doctor's diagnosis. Therefore, patients suffering from Hansen's disease can live normal lives if they take medicine according to their doctor's prescriptions.

How can I protect people around me against Hansen's bacillus?

Ans: As Hansen's disease is transmitted through prolonged and close contact with patients suffering from Hansen's disease or via nasal secretions containing the pathogen in the nasal cavity or upper airway mucosa. Therefore, to avoid spreading the infection to other people, Hansen's disease patients should take medicine according to their doctor's prescription and maintain good personal hygiene habits. For example, they should cover their mouth and nose with handkerchiefs or tissues when sneezing or coughing. If their family members or co-inhabitants have any skin issues, they should seek medical treatment at a dermatologist near them. It is better to have experts diagnose the problems to discover and treat the disease early.

What is DOTS?

Ans: The purpose of DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course) is to ensure each patient suffered from Hansen's disease will take each of the pills according to prescription with the



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help and under the supervision of medical and public health personnel and trained DOTS caregivers. They also give patients care and help evaluate patients if there is any side effect after taking the medicine to complete the treatment. This practice is regarded as the realization of the spirit of “delivering medicine to the patient, seeing to it that the patient takes the medicine, and leaving after the patient has taken the medicine” to prevent the antibiotic-resistant bacteria. It is also an effective way to safeguard the general public and prevent the disease from spreading.

If migrant workers are diagnosed with Hansen’s disease, can they still stay in Taiwan to seek medical attention?

Ans: If migrant workers are diagnosed with Hansen’s disease, their employers shall apply for DOTS to local health departments by submitting the “certificate of diagnosis” and “Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course (DOTS) Consent Form for Foreign Employee” within 15 days from the next day of the receipt of the certificate of diagnosis, and migrant workers can then stay in Taiwan for treatment. If the migrant workers are unable to cooperate with DOTS for 15 days (inclusive) or longer, local health departments will issue letters to refuse the filing for recordation and inform the Ministry of Labor (to suspend employment permit) and the National Immigration Agency, Ministry of the Interior (to note entry prohibited). When migrant workers complete treatment with DOTS and are verified by county (city) health authorities, they can be regarded as passing their health check.

Should contacts of Hansen’s disease patients get health checks?

Ans: When an individual has been confirmed to have Hansen’s disease, health personnel will help conduct an evaluation. People living with the patient should receive a medical examination and be referred to a diagnosis and treatment hospital for confirmed cases of Hansen’s disease to undergo testing among contacts.

How to protect yourself when being around Hansen’s disease patients?

Ans: After taking medicine, Hansen’s disease patients will not be contagious anymore. Therefore, the best way to protect yourself is to pay attention to patients to see if they take medicine regularly or not. If you pass the health check, and the patients are confirmed to take medicine regularly, you do not need to worry about being infected. In addition, it is also important to keep indoor areas ventilated and maintain good hygiene habits, such as hand hygiene and cough etiquette.

