

NOTIFIED IMPORTED INFECTIONS 2002

No. 5, 2004

Travel activity and immigration carry with them the risk of importing infectious diseases. The type of diseases and number of cases affected will depend on destination, country, duration of travel, etc. Every year, about one million Danes travel abroad on package holidays. According to Statistics Denmark, about 8% of the Danish population are immigrants or have an immigrant background and about 50,000 persons immigrate every year. Most of them, 38,000, come from Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia or New Zealand. At present, the remaining 12,000 persons come primarily from Africa, China, Iraq, Pakistan and Thailand. In 2002, about 3,200 cases of infectious diseases were notified to the Department of Epidemiology. In addition, 135 cases of malaria were notified to the Parasitology Laboratory, SSI. Of the infections mentioned in table 1, 873 (28%) were acquired abroad, 2030 (65%) in Denmark. For 208 (7%) infections, the country of infection was unknown. This is similar to 2001, EPI-NEWS 6/03. In-depth data regarding the individual infections can be found in the annual reports. Apart from the notifiable infections, 69 persons were given prophylactic treatment against rabies after possible exposure abroad, particularly Thailand and Turkey.

Comments

Acute infections are usually acquired after departure from Denmark, either by immigrants on visits to their homeland or Danes on travels abroad. Chronic infections in immigrants will usually be acquired before arrival in Denmark, usually in the former native country.

The number of imported food-borne infections was presumably far greater than shown in table 1, as it is only on suspicion of a specific foodstuff that these infections are notifiable.

Imported infections were seldom the cause of secondary infection. An exception was hepatitis A, where it has been possible to relate more outbreaks to primary infection abroad. A major outbreak in Holstebro affected a total of 25 persons, including 21 in 2002, EPI-NEWS 36/03.

Apart from this outbreak, the proportion of hepatitis A infections acquired abroad is 27/63 (43%). This proportion is still significantly lower than the 70% in 2001, suggesting a relative increase in spread of infection within Denmark.

The National Board of Health recommends vaccination of the children of immigrants against hepatitis A before visits to the homeland or other trips abroad with risk of infection.

(A. H. Christiansen, S. Samuelsson, Department of Epidemiology)

AVIAN INFLUENZA IN ASIA

Thailand and Vietnam are the only countries where avian influenza virus A (H5N1) has currently been found in humans in relation to an outbreak of avian influenza among poultry in Asia. In Thailand, the virus has been isolated from three patients, of whom two died. In Viet Nam, seven patients have been reported sick, six of whom died. It is important to emphasise that infection from person to person has not been detected. There are currently no travel restrictions to Asia, including Thailand and Viet Nam. However, travellers to the area are advised to avoid contact with live poultry, e.g. at markets and the like, where live animals are sold. There is no risk from eating cooked poultry. H5N1 influenza virus is currently found in poultry in Cambodia, Japan, southern China, South Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam. The surveillance of respiratory infections in humans has been intensified in the whole region, and the WHO has taken the initiative to develop a vaccine. The SSI has developed a genetic test that can identify all types of avian influenza virus, EPI-NEWS 42/03. Most recent news about the current situation is available on www.ssi.dk and www.who.int.

(S. Glismann, Dept. of Epidemiology)
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Table 1. Notified imported infections; number acquired abroad, total number notified, and percentage of infections acquired abroad, 2001-2002

	Acquired abroad		Notified, total no.		pc		Most frequent country of infection
	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	
Shigella	93	107	130	149	72	72	Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan, India
Typhoid fever	7	12	10	17	70	71	Pakistan
Paratyphoid fever	8	7	14	17	57	41	Pakistan
VTEC	15	20	128	93	12	22	
Food-borne disease	98	131	659	894	15	15	Europe, Thailand
Tuberculosis	159	222	420	508	38	44	Somalia, Pakistan
Legionella pneumonia	32	25	96	103	33	24	Turkey, Spain
Leptospirosis	0	0	4	4	0	0	
HIV	114	107	288	319	40	34	Africa, Thailand
AIDS	19	22	41	72	46	31	Africa, Asia
Syphilis	9	6	34	23	26	26	
Gonorrhoea	45	39	227	130	20	30	Thailand, Europe
Hepatitis A	31	44	84	63	37	70	Turkey, Pakistan
B - acute	7	7	62	47	11	15	
B - chronic	73	109	122	149	60	73	Turkey, Somalia
C - acute	1	0	5	8	20	0	Spain
C - chronic	20	26	246	254	8	10	Europe, the Middle East, Asia
Measles	3	1	32	11	9	9	Asia, Europe
Mumps	0	2	2	4	0	50	
Pertussis in children							
< 2 years	1	1	329	196	0	1	Pakistan
Malaria	135	152	135	152	100	100	Africa, Asia
Neuroborreliosis	3	5	43	52	7	10	Europe
Total	873	1045	3111	3265	28	32	

Patients with laboratory-diagnosed chlamydia, by county and gender

2nd and 3rd quarters of 2003 compared with the corresponding period in 2002

County	2nd quarter 2003			2nd quarter 2002		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Cph and Frb Municipalities	276	499	775	280	467	747
Copenhagen	138	277	416 *	130	293	423
Frederiksborg	61	139	202 *	54	99	153
Roskilde	33	98	131	36	98	134
West Zealand	57	132	189	63	146	209
Storstrøm	43	91	134	40	107	147
Bornholm	5	17	22	7	19	26
Funen	90	295	386 *	105	233	338
South Jutland	56	158	214	53	121	174
Ribe	56	123	179	51	91	142
Vejle	72	168	241 *	81	188	269
Ringkøbing	64	107	171	72	142	214
Aarhus	181	324	505	212	405	618 *
Viborg	47	96	143	43	123	167 *
North Jutland	114	255	369	105	272	377
Total	1293	2779	4077 *	1332	2804	4138 *

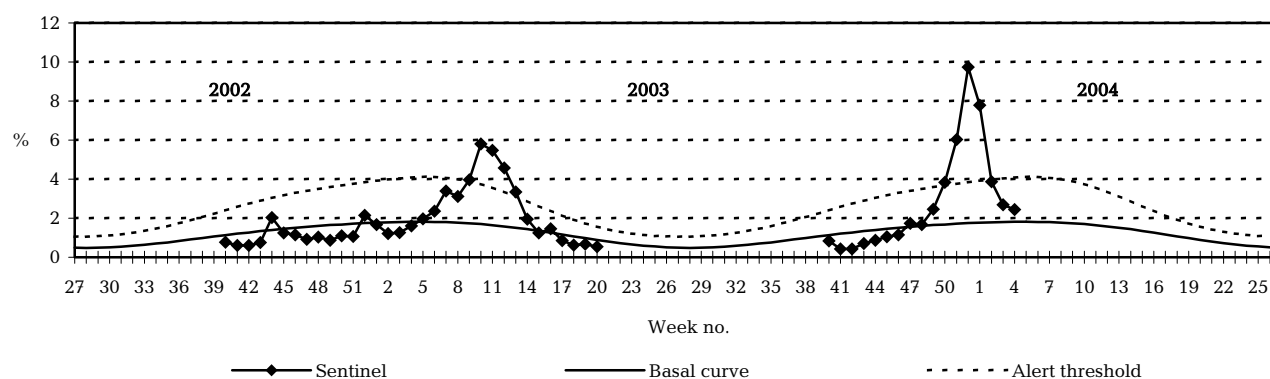
County	3rd quarter 2003			3rd quarter 2002		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Cph and Frb Municipalities	383	642	1029 *	274	521	796 *
Copenhagen	165	343	509 *	141	271	412
Frederiksborg	73	190	263	49	118	167
Roskilde	43	112	155	39	132	171
West Zealand	91	185	276	48	122	170
Storstrøm	48	94	143 *	49	117	168 *
Bornholm	4	15	19	3	29	32
Funen	139	311	450	114	260	375 *
South Jutland	64	173	237	44	136	180
Ribe	72	112	185 *	62	108	170
Vejle	98	227	325	76	181	257
Ringkøbing	69	113	183 *	46	136	182
Aarhus	210	400	610	203	382	585
Viborg	72	130	202	59	116	175
North Jutland	154	307	462 *	105	227	332
Total	1685	3354	5048 *	1312	2856	4172 *

* In an unidentified number of persons, gender was unknown

(DBMP)

Sentinel surveillance of the influenza activity

Weekly percentage of consultations, 2002/2003/2004



Sentinel:

Influenza consultations as percentage of total consultations

Basal curve:

Expected frequency of influenza consultations under non-epidemic conditions

Alert threshold:

Possible incipient epidemic

(Dept. of Epidemiology)