

# 美和學校財團法人美和科技大學

## 107 年度教師產學合作計畫 結案報告

計畫名稱：更新與維護屏東縣政府衛生局 107 年度英語網頁

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## 更新與維護屏東縣政府衛生局 107 年度英語網頁

政府自 2016 年 7 月起推動新南向政策，其中提高台灣的觀光產值也是其目標之一，為了改善台灣的觀光環境，營造友善的觀光環境以吸引外國觀光客發展經濟，交通部會同風景區各權責單位，加強檢視轄區內英語標示的情形，藉以減低英語標示不全或錯誤的狀況；由此可見，建置良好的雙語環境有利於推動國家的觀光政策。

多年來，屏東縣政府致力舉辦各類大型活動以帶動縣內的觀光，雖然墾丁國家公園、鵝鑾鼻、大鵬灣、小琉球等地早已名聞遐邇，但屏東縣政府仍致力開發觀光景點或承辦大型活動，以吸引更多人潮創造商機，例如萬金聖母聖殿已成近幾年聖誕節新興的觀光景點，2015 年 12 月啟用的琉璃橋也是另一吸睛的景點，再者，屏東縣政府將承辦 2019 年台灣燈會，在大鵬灣舉辦燈會。衛生局隸屬於屏東縣政府，對於縣政府所推動觀光產業也共同盡應有的義務與責任。

英文為國際語言，對於不同族群得以藉由英文獲得交流，本計畫之目的除了協助更新與維護屏東縣政府衛生局的英文網頁，每個月提供國內外醫藥衛生的相關英文訊息之外，也會不定時提供最新的觀光雙語資訊，讓民眾進入衛生局的網站時，除了獲得醫藥衛生的最新英文資訊外，同時也能汲取觀光方面的雙語資訊，有助於屏東縣政府推動觀光產業。

網路無遠弗屆，網站早已成為個人或各單位行銷或提供訊息的重要管道，要邁向國際化與全球化，可透過建置英文網頁慢慢達到。此外，在台生活的外籍人士為數不少，了解台灣各種政策與法規對他們相當重要，透過英文網站提供相關的訊息可營造外籍人士的友善環境，衛生機關許多措施與政策都與人民生活息息相關，在台的外籍人士也不例外，另外，隨著台灣觀光政策對新南向國家簽證的開放，以及政府大力宣傳觀光活動，使得來台觀光的人數穩定成長，除了大陸來台觀光人數不少，新南向的觀光客人數則成長迅速，屏東縣擁有自然豐富的觀光資源，更能吸引觀光人潮。所以，如何讓外籍人士迅速又正確地獲得醫藥及觀光相關的訊息相當重要，英文網頁的更新與維護則扮演重要的角色，更新及維護英文網頁對許多機構而言是困難且繁瑣的，若能藉由學術單位的外語及觀光專業教師之協助，應能提供外籍人士友善的英文網頁環境，透過學界與產業的合作，讓學界有機會更深入認識機關與服務社區，也讓產業界了解學界能提供專業的服務，共創雙贏之局面。

**關鍵詞：**英文網頁，網站，全球化，國際化，觀光

## **Maintain and Update the English Website of Public Health Bureau, Pingtung County Government in 2018**

The New Southward Policy was started from July, 2016. To attract more foreigners to visit Taiwan, it is necessary to build sound bilingual user-friendly environment. Though Pingtung County has many famous and popular attraction spots, like Kenting National Park, Eluanbi Lighthouse, and Dapen Bay, the Pingtung Government still makes a lot of efforts to create new tourist attractions for the public to promote tourism industry to increase tourism profits and market Pingtung County. The Public Health Bureau, a part of Pingtung County Government, has the obligation and responsibilities for assisting Pingtung County Government to promote tourism industry beside healthcare service.

The purpose of the project is to help maintain and update the English website of Public Health Bureau, Pingtung County Government, to provide the public medical, healthy, and tourism information in English. With the advance of technology, Internet has become an essential way to communicate with each other. To move towards internationalization and globalization, English is an important communicative tool all over the world. Recently, more and more foreigners live and travel in Taiwan; therefore, it is necessary for them to get related information from the English websites of government institutions at any time because a lot of policies and regulations are connected with the public. In other words, English website is an important medium between government institutions and foreigners. However, how to present correct information in English is a big challenge for many government institutions because they do not have professional specialists. To solve the problem, through the cooperation between universities and government institutions, universities can provide professional knowledge, information and techniques in English, and government institutions can create a user-friendly environment for foreigners. Moreover, under this condition, universities have much more opportunities to understand what kind of service government institutions can provide the public. On the other hand, government institutions would realize universities are a great social resource for the public and community. By this way, it is much easier to create a win-win status for both universities and government institutions.

**Keywords: English webpage, website, globalization, internationalization, tourism**

## 研究背景、動機與目的

根據交通部觀光局統計資料，106 年來臺旅客為已超過 1073 萬人次，與 105 年 1069 多萬人次相比較，成長一些。其中 106 年「觀光」目的旅客有 764 萬人次，較 105 年的 756 萬人次稍有成長。由以上資料顯示，觀光產業將因來臺觀光的人數成長而更加發展，政府近幾年來致力推動觀光產業，也從政策面著手，如 2002 年發展台灣為永續觀光的「綠色矽島」；2004 年訂為「台灣觀光年」，2005 年推動「旅館等級評鑑制度」，以星級標識取代「梅花」標識，使我國之旅館管理體制與國際接軌，便利消費者辨識；2006 年建立台灣觀光國際品牌形象，持續以"Taiwan, Touch your heart"為國際行銷的 Slogan；2007 年以「美麗臺灣」、「特色臺灣」、「友善臺灣」、「品質臺灣」及「行銷臺灣」為主軸，全方位打造優質的旅遊環境；2008 年啟動「2008-2009 旅行台灣年」；2009 年推動「2009 旅行台灣年」及「觀光拔尖計畫」，並落實「重要觀光景點建設中程計畫」以「再生與成長」為核心基調，朝「多元開放，佈局全球」方向，打造台灣為亞洲主要旅遊目的地。

到了 2010 年則推動「觀光拔尖領航方案」，朝「發展國際觀光、提升國內旅遊品質、增加外匯收入」之目標邁進，讓世界看見台灣觀光新魅力；而 2011 年推動「觀光拔尖領航方案」及「旅行臺灣·感動 100」工作計畫，朝「發展國際觀光、提升國內旅遊品質、增加外匯收入」之目標邁進，讓世界看見台灣觀光新魅力；2012 年持續推動「觀光拔尖領航方案」及「重要觀光景點建設中程計畫」，並以「Taiwan-the Heart of Asia 亞洲精華 心動台灣」及「Time for Taiwan 旅行台灣 就是現在」為宣傳主軸，逐步打造臺灣成為「亞洲觀光之心(星)」；2013 年持續推動「觀光拔尖領航方案」及落實行政院「經濟動能推升方案」之「優化觀光提升質量」工作，建構質量併進的觀光環境；並以「旅行臺灣 就是現在」為行銷主軸，訴求全球旅客體驗臺灣的美食、美景與美德。2014 年持續推動「觀光拔尖領航方案」、「重要觀光景點建設中程計畫」及「經濟動能推升方案」之「優化觀光提升質量」，並深化「Time for Taiwan 旅行臺灣 就是現在」的行銷主軸，在「創新」及「永續」的施政理念下，質量並進推展觀光；2015-2016 年推動「觀光大國行動方案」、「重要觀光景點建設中程計畫」，深化「Time for Taiwan 旅行臺灣 就是現在」的行銷主軸，以「優質、特色、智慧、永續」為執行策略，逐步打造臺灣成為質量優化、創意加值，處處皆可觀光的觀光大國；2017 年研訂「Tourism 2020-臺灣永續觀光發展策略」，以「創新永續 打造在地幸福產業」、「多元開拓 創造觀光附加價值」為目標，透過「開拓多元市場、推動國民旅遊、輔導產業轉型、發展智慧觀光及推廣體驗觀光」等 5 大發展策略，落實

相關執行計畫，期藉由整合觀光資源，發揮臺灣獨有的在地產業優勢，讓觀光旅遊不只帶來產值，也能發揮社會力、就業力及國際競爭力；2018年推動「Tourism 2020-臺灣永續觀光發展方案」，以「創新永續，打造在地幸福產業」、「多元開拓，創造觀光附加價值」、「安全安心，落實旅遊社會責任」為目標，持續透過「開拓多元市場、活絡國民旅遊、輔導產業轉型、發展智慧觀光及推廣體驗觀光」等5大策略，落實21項執行計畫，積極打造臺灣觀光品牌，形塑臺灣成為「友善、智慧、體驗」之亞洲重要旅遊目的地。可見，為了推動觀光產業，政府每年都配合不同的主題來行銷觀光，各單位也應協助政府發展觀光產業。

依據行政院97年10月30日院授主忠三字第0970005767A號函送98年度政府公共建設計畫先期作業審議結果建議事項略以：「為因應全球化趨勢，除依本計畫推動營造外國人在台之國際生活環境外，請研考會會同教育部，另案研議愛台十二項建設中有關智慧台灣—人才培育項下有關係『加強語文教育』相關措施，以營造本國人提升英語能力之環境。」另外，依據行政院營造國際生活環境推動小組98年3月2日召開第2次會議，討論「提升國人英語能力建設計畫(草案)」。

綜觀國際活動及會議，英語是主要的溝通語言，無疑地，為了能在國際舞台上具有一席之地，具有國際化的英語能力是不可獲缺的工具，「英語能力」不但是全球化與國際化的關鍵能力，「英語能力」也能提升產業國際服務力，「英語能力」更可強化城市與全球的連結。

為了建構國際生活環境調查及輔導機制，國家發展委員會於2016年6月制訂「地方政府雙語標示標準作業手冊」，以因應台灣邁向全球化與國際化的舞台，各機關單位極力營造友善外國人的生活環境，以致道路標示、設施使用說明、引導路線等皆以雙語呈現，網路已是現代人蒐羅資訊的便利工具，許多的行銷策略也藉用網路的便利性與滲透性達到宣傳的目標，因此，各機關可透過英文網頁將欲宣導的政策或相關消息讓外籍人士迅速獲得，屏東縣政府近年致力推動觀光產業，如2019年將承辦台灣燈會活動，也希望全民共同行銷屏東縣，認識屏東的美，衛生局隸屬於屏東縣政府，也有責任與義務協助推動屏東縣的觀光產業，所以，透過英文網頁內容提供外籍人士醫藥及觀光相關的重要資訊是相當可行的管道，透過學界與機關單位的產學合作，由機關單位提供欲發佈的相關資料，學界提供外語及觀光的專業知識，共同提升台灣雙語環境的水準，合力共創友善外籍人士的生活環境。

基於共創社區進步與服務社區的理念，研究者希望透過外語及觀光專業之能力，提供屏東縣

政府衛生局在英文網頁內容上之協助，適時更新其英文網頁內容，也藉此協助台灣之外籍人士經由屏東縣政府衛生局的英文網頁，了解目前台灣地方衛生單位的重要宣導政策及觀光資訊，並及時獲得相關的醫療衛生與觀光旅遊訊息，另外，提供英語學習平台給屏東縣政府衛生局的網站瀏覽者學習實用英語的機會。

### 文獻探討

環視台灣各機關學校單位的中文網頁幾乎都已建置的相當完整，民眾可迅速連線獲得該單位的相關資訊，但英文網頁相較之下就顯得簡單貧乏許多，甚至出現不正確或不適當的用法，導致在台的外籍人士在尋找相關資訊時相當困擾；事實上，網頁呈現的目的不在炫麗奪目，而在資訊的傳遞，所以正確地傳遞資訊是英文網頁的重點與目標，一般來說，學術機構的英文網頁較為完整，因為學術單位有較多可提供語言與資訊方面的人才，但是，製作英文網頁對一般機關單位來說，卻是一項艱苦又棘手的工程，因此，多數機關單位的英文網頁不外乎委外製作，但是品質的維護就很難掌控，資料的更新更是不易，若能透過學界的協助，對於機關單位可能會是較可行的辦法。

以屏東科技大學為例，為了促使各單位英文網頁的建置與內容的充實度，2005年5月制定了中英文網頁比賽評審細則，另外，高雄醫學大學於2008年9月進行英文網頁建置計畫，要求各單位於3個月內完成英文網頁的建置，為確保品質也舉辦各單位的英文網頁比賽，由此足見學術單位對英文網頁的要求與重視，事實上，目前許多學校除了以比賽方式催生英文網頁之外，還要求定期更新網頁內容，以提供外界最新資訊，並將其當成績效評核的標準；另外，中國大陸的一些學者也對於高校或企業的英文網頁做了分析或研究，例如，張新軍、楊慧(2003)表示譯文讀者的接受性，決定著譯文資訊傳播的有效性，透過調查外國受試者對中國高校英文網頁的反應和態度，對翻譯中的一些普遍的問題進行分析，並提出建議。范勇(2005)則以翻譯目的論的原理為理論框架，從翻譯的目的性出發，並參考譯語文化中的平行文本，舉例分析了中國一些重點大學網站英文版"學校概況"中存在的功能性、文化性以及語言性翻譯失誤的現象，並指出，產生這些失誤的根源在於譯者缺少翻譯的目的意識。

再者，楊曉斌(2007)指出越來越多的中國公司在互聯網上建立自己的網站，使用兩種甚至多種文本製作網頁，力求更好地宣傳自己的產品、挖掘潛在的市場、樹立企業的形象，從理論上講，這是個十分經濟有效的辦法，但在實踐中未必盡如人意，通過實際調查分析發現，中國公司網頁多半採用

中英文兩個文本製作，其中英譯文本品質問題是影響產品促銷和企業形象的主要因素，因此，建議重視網頁翻譯工作，尤其要避免誤譯現象，搞好公司的對外宣傳。范勇 (2008) 曾對中國高校英文網頁存在問題研究，提出看法。

此外，韓孟奇 (2008) 發現中國著名企業的英文版網頁普遍存在與翻譯目的論相悖的問題，如功能性、文化性、語言性翻譯失誤等等，影響宣傳效果甚至自身形象，其運用目的理論，分析了一些著名企業英文版網站"企業概況"中存在的失誤，目的在促使目前的企業英文版網頁狀況得以改善。韋曉萍、劉明忠 (2009) 運用功能翻譯理論研究企業網站英語翻譯策略，提出企業網站的翻譯是一種有目的的行動交往的觀點，翻譯的目的就是傳播企業資訊和文化，吸引受眾購買或消費企業產品，翻譯策略受翻譯目的支配；文本類型理論也對翻譯策略的運用起著指導作用，並討論企業英語網站翻譯策略。

近來，李海玲 李海麗 (2009) 指出高校的英文網頁簡介已發展成為展示學校形象的重要視窗，但其在對外宣傳過程中所起到的作用並不盡如人意，主要是由於英漢高校簡介在語言和文化等方面存在著種種差異，其從功能翻譯理論視角對學校網頁簡介的翻譯作了初步的探討，提出闡釋性增譯、改寫或重組以及零翻譯可以作為網頁簡介翻譯的有效策略。還有，李元青 (2009) 曾分析中美高校在介紹文本內容方面存在的不同傾向，並著力探究中國高校英文網頁在文本介紹內容上的不足與欠缺之處，並提出相應的改進意見。由以上可見，中國大陸也意識到網路無遠弗屆，若英文網頁做的好不但可提升自我形象，也是邁向全球化的最佳捷徑。

在台灣，政府也了解英文網頁的重要性，為了督促公家單位製作英文網頁，提供在台外籍人士相關的資訊，行政院研考會還提供了製作網頁的要素配置表，如表 1 所示。

表 1 網頁組成要素配置表

名稱	所在頁面	位置	使用文字 (註：標籤名稱與呈現方式)	建議說明
網站名稱與識別標誌	全站	左上	呈現中文 / 英文全名與識別標誌	按標誌可回到首頁
網站地圖	全站	右上	中文版：網站地圖 英文版：Sitemap	提供全網站架構並提供連結。
回首頁	非首頁	右上	中文版：回首頁 英文版：Home	點選後可回到首頁。
意見信箱	首頁	右上	中文版：意見信箱 英文版：Feedback	以表單方式為主要填寫介面。

常見問答	首頁	右上	中文版：常見問答 英文版：FAQs	點選可進入常見問答（FAQs）頁面
語言版本切換按鈕	首頁	右上	如： English（可連至英文版） 中文（可連至中文版） 日本語（可連至日文版）	語言版本切換按鈕直接以該語言呈現，點選可切換至中文／英文版本網站首頁。
PDA 版本	首頁	右上	中文版：PDA（連至中文版 PDA） 英文版：PDA（連至英文版 PDA）	設計 PDA 版本時，宜考量符合 PDA 裝置的版面大小，並考量連線速度，提供適合的內容。
全站搜尋	首頁	不限	中文版：全站搜尋 英文版：Search	輸入關鍵字按 Enter 鍵可進入檢索結果，並輔以進階檢索或檢索操作說明。
雙語詞彙	首頁	不限	中文版：雙語詞彙 英文版：Bilingual Glossary	
RSS	首頁	不限	中文版：RSS 英文版：RSS	點選後進入 RSS 訂閱單元。
資料日期	全站適當處	不限	按照 ISO 標準，即 YYYY-MM-DD	針對新聞稿、活動訊息、最新消息、公告文書等動態訊息，提供發布與截止日期。
留言版	首頁	不限	中文版：留言版 / 討論區 / 論壇 英文版：Message Board / Discussion Forum / Forum	建議機關提供留言版時，同時制定明確的管理與使用規則，避免公共討論區淪為民眾謾罵空間。
會員專區	首頁	不限	中文版：會員專區 英文版：Member Login	可於首頁提供會員輸入帳號密碼的輸入方框，搭配忘記密碼與申請會員的連結。網站可以 email 主動告知會員最新資訊。
便民服務	首頁	不限	中文版：便民服務 英文版：Online Service	讓使用者不需下載填寫表單，可於線上申辦完成。標示各項申辦案件的聯絡窗口、作業流程及相關屬性讓民眾在申辦前即能得到充份資訊。
政府相關標章	首頁	下方		標章圖片保持原圖或等比縮放大小，並設定替代性標籤，且圖片應可連結到相關網址。



聯絡電話	首頁	下方	中文版：（區碼）4 碼 -4 碼， 或（區碼）3 碼 -4 碼。 如：（02）1234-5678 或 （04）123-4567 英文版：（國碼）區碼 -4 碼 -4 碼， 或（國碼）區碼 -3 碼 -4 碼。 如：（+886）2-1234-5678 或 （+886）2-123-4567	建議放置機關或單位總機，而非個人分機。
聯絡地址	首頁	下方	中文版：5 碼 郵遞區號 + 縣市名開頭的地址 英文版：以台灣郵政「中文地址英譯」為準，並提供 5 碼 郵遞區號	可在地址旁邊加上「交通位置圖」字樣，並連結至交通位置說明網頁。
隱私權政策	首頁	下方	中文版：隱私權政策 英文版：Privacy Policy	連結至 隱私權 政策說明頁面。
網站安全政策	首頁	下方	中文版：網站安全政策 英文版：Security Policy	連結至網站安全政策說明頁面。
我的 E 政府識別標誌	首頁	下方	呈現「我的 E 政府」識別標誌 中文版的 Alt 標籤：我的 E 政府 英文版的 Alt 標籤：The E-government Entry Point of Taiwan	依據各網站設計的色系，製作 43x46 像素的圖片檔（可至本規範網頁下載圖片原始檔），並連結至「我的 E 政府」網站。

由以上相關資料在在顯示，成功的英文網頁可成為推銷自我的最佳利器，但失敗的英文網頁卻有可能鬧出笑話令人貽笑大方，因此，相關單位不得不特別謹慎注意。

## 擷取部分 107 年衛生局英文網站資料

### Women's arterial diseases often go unnoticed (2018/1/13)

A 56-year-old woman with a history of high blood pressure recently discovered that her arteries had hardened and that blood flow to areas of her brain was blocked.

Endothelial cells, which line the blood vessels, serve the function of moderating blood pressure. However, if they are in an environment of high blood pressure, high cholesterol or high blood sugar for a long time, their function gradually

becomes disrupted. This gives bad cholesterol an opportunity to accumulate inside the arteries, forming plaque and causing them to harden.

As arteries harden quietly and over long periods, many people underestimate the risks of having high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and high blood sugar.

Hardening of the arteries is the main cause of heart disease and strokes. Apart from normal aging, family history, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and smoking all exacerbate the problem.

Before women reach menopause, their blood vessels are protected by estrogen, during this time endothelial function is comparatively better and the hardening of arteries and formation of plaque is less likely to occur. However, after menopause, the processes speed up.

In men, hardening of the arteries is often accompanied by the formation of detectable local plaque and typical angina symptoms.

In women, it comes with a shortage of blood flow due to a general narrowing of the arteries and is likely to make them feel tired, weak and short of breath, or lead to sleep problems at night.

If people discover that they have high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol or high blood sugar after the health examination, they should proceed with medication, diets and periodic follow-ups as circumstances require.

## **Facebook to stress friends in changes (2018/1/13)**

Facebook Inc on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> began to change the way it filters posts and videos on its centerpiece News Feed, the start of what chief executive Mark Zuckerberg said would be a series of changes in the design of the world's largest social network.

Facebook, which owns four of the world's most popular smartphone apps including Instagram, has for years prioritized material that its complex computer algorithms think people would engage with through comments, "likes" or other ways of showing interest.

The shift is likely to mean that the time people spend on Facebook and some measures of engagement would go down in the short term, but it would be better for users and for the business over the long term.

Facebook and its social media competitors have been inundated by criticism that their products reinforce users' views on social and political issues and lead to addictive viewing habits, raising questions about possible regulation and the businesses' long-term viability.

With more than 2 billion monthly users, Facebook is the world's largest social media network. It is also among the world's largest corporations.

## **Psoriasis can lead to eye damage: dermatologist (2018/1/12)**

People with psoriasis are at an increased risk of developing eye inflammation and resultant vision damage.

Psoriasis is a chronic inflammatory skin disorder caused by genetic and environmental factors. The low temperatures and less sunshine during winter, sleeping late, mental stress, obesity and smoking and drinking habits can cause symptoms to worsen.

Studies have suggested that psoriasis is not only a skin condition, but that severe psoriasis with large-scale skin inflammation can affect vital organs, including increased risk of kidney disease, myocardial infarction or heart attack, as well as a cerebral vascular accident or stroke.

People with psoriasis are encouraged to maintain a balanced lifestyle, get sufficient sleep, relax, exercise regularly, avoid smoking and drinking, and maintain a healthy body weight.

## **Chikungunya fever case confirmed in southern Taiwan (2018/1/12)**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> announced this year's first case of imported chikungunya fever.

The CDC quarantine station at Kaohsiung International Airport detected that the man had a fever when he arrived on Tuesday last week.

Since chikungunya fever was placed on the list of notifiable communicable diseases in October 2007, a total of 106 cases have been reported, and all of them were imported from other nations.

People visiting areas with mosquito-borne diseases should take preventive measures against mosquito bites, such as wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants, using insect repellents approved by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and using mosquito nets or window screens.

During cold weather, people should keep warm and practice good personal hygiene, especially washing their hands frequently, covering their mouth when sneezing or coughing, and wearing a mask to prevent the spread of infection.

Relenza and Tamiflu — the two types of government-funded antiviral medicine — can be used to treat type A and type B influenza, so people should seek treatment at one of the more than 4,000 medical facilities with the medicines.

## **More proactive flu strategy needed (2018/1/12)**

In the past couple of weeks, the number of seasonal flu cases has seen a steep rise. The dominant circulating virus has been of the Yamagata lineage, which is different from the vaccine strain of the Victoria lineage recommended by the WHO. As a result, the effectiveness of the protection offered by the vaccine has dropped to only 30 percent of its original expectation and led to a massive epidemic.

Faced with the difficult situation caused by the epidemic virus strain differing from the virus strain that the vaccine is intended to protect against, medical experts suggest that quadrivalent flu vaccines should be given so as to provide protection against the two types of influenza B.

However, the price for one dose of quadrivalent flu vaccine is NT\$2,000 and it is not covered by the National Health Insurance.

According to a report in Time magazine on Dec. 25 last year, there was a severe epidemic of influenza A in Australia last winter that resulted in nearly three times as many cases as compared to the same period of the past few years.

The main reason for the epidemic was that the H3N2 and H1N1 viruses growing in chicken eggs that were selected for manufacturing the vaccine underwent mutations, which reduced the effectiveness of the protection provided by the vaccine.

Experts recommend that the vaccine continues to be administered for the purposes of alleviating symptoms and lowering the spread of flu. Influenza A was prevalent in Taiwan last year from June to August.

If the influenza A and two mutated influenza B viruses simultaneously become epidemic, leading to a huge flu outbreak, it would be difficult to estimate the consequences.

In addition to seasonal flu, several outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenzas such as H5N2 and H5N6 have been reported in southern Taiwan at the very beginning of this year.

Flu epidemics in Taiwan are special in that the specific virus strain of the seasonal flu in Taiwan is identified two years before the virus strain selected by the WHO for manufacturing vaccines. Adding influenza virus strains from Southeast Asia into the consideration when making vaccines has been continuously proposed to the WHO for 10 years, but always comes to no avail.

The government should follow the example of Japan's National Institute of Infectious Diseases and establish a central epidemic prevention and research center to designate preventive measures and conduct influenza research, so as to be able to react effectively to virus mutations and the threat of bird flu.

## **The importance of annual rabies vaccinations (2018/1/11)**

The Taipei City Animal Protection Office said on Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> that there have been recent cases in hilly areas of rabies, which can be contracted by both animals and humans. The office recommends that pet owners take their animals for a rabies vaccination every year, to protect the health of their pets.

In recent years there have been cases of rabies-infected ferret badgers in mountainous areas entering households and biting members of the public, especially in areas of high population density and high pet ownership, such as metropolitan Taipei and the surrounding hills. Pet owners in these areas should be even more vigilant about their pets' health.

## **Tobacco must be strictly controlled (2018/1/9)**

Because the majority of Taiwanese women who have lung cancer are non-smokers, the media, the general public and even lung cancer experts mostly blame air pollution and think that tobacco control is not an important measure to consider.

The incidence of lung cancer continued to rise and did not start to fall until 1990. In Taiwan, smoking among men peaked in the 1970s at 65 percent and then began to decline. At the time of peak smoking rates, women were surrounded by male smokers, including their grandfathers, fathers, brothers, husbands and colleagues, so that eight or nine out of every 10 women were exposed to secondhand smoke.

The amount of PM2.5 — fine particulate matter measuring 2.5 micrometers or smaller — absorbed when someone smokes one cigarette is 12mg, which is equivalent to breathing outdoor air with a 0.5mg per cubic meter concentration of PM2.5 for one day. Indoor PM2.5 from secondhand smoke can also reach 0.5mg per cubic meter.

When lung cancer incidence in Taiwanese men was rising, the incidence in women increased in tandem, even though it was half or less of the incidence in men. Remarkably, when the lung cancer incidence rate for men started to fall, the rate for women also fell.

These trends show a commonality between the causes of cancer in men and women. The difference is that men's lung cancer is mostly caused by firsthand smoke, while women's tends to be caused by secondhand smoke. Research by the Taiwan Lung Cancer Society provides further confirmation of these findings.

Pulmonary adenocarcinomas account for the majority of lung cancer cases in Taiwan, but it would be dubious to conclude from this that these cancer cases are not caused by smoking. In the past, people smoked unfiltered cigarettes, which tends to cause squamous-cell carcinomas due to their highly toxic smoke that contains relatively large particles.

Filtered and "light" cigarettes have become more common and their smoke contains more PM2.5, which penetrate into the lung lobes where they cause adenocarcinomas. Cutting the incidence of lung cancer depends more on reducing smoking than on reducing air pollution.

Low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) is a relatively new way of screening for lung cancer that subjects patients to lower doses of radiation than standard CT scans, but when used on non-smokers it does more harm than good.

In the US, LDCT screening is only used on heavy smokers, but even then it is uncertain whether its benefits outweigh its harmful effects.

LDCT produces a high number of false positive results, which causes many patients with suspected symptoms to suffer the torment of further tests and invasive biopsies, but in the end it often turns out that there was nothing to worry about.

Setting up an effective tobacco prevention system is the best and quickest way to stamp out the menace of lung cancer.

## **Medical research finds causes for lung cancer in non-smokers (2018/1/6)**

According to a new report on a study by the Health Promotion Administration (HPA) and Taiwan Lung Cancer Society (TLCC), 20 people in 1,000 who are non-smokers but who have risk factors such as a family history of cancer, exposure to secondhand smoke or smoky environments or who have lung disease, will develop lung cancer.

According to WHO data, smoke is a major risk factor for lung cancer, but in Taiwan many people who have never smoked also develop the disease.

Preliminary research suggests that members of the public that do not smoke and yet have a family history of lung cancer, who are exposed to secondhand smoke or smoky environments and who have lung disease of some form have a 20 in 1,000 chance of developing lung cancer, which is a significantly high risk. As a result, it is a good idea for people in the 55 to 75 age group to get themselves screened for lung cancer.

## **GBC optimistic after hepatitis D testing kit approved (2018/1/6)**

General Biologicals Corp (GBC) on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> expressed optimism on sales this year after GB HDV Ab, its new hepatitis D diagnostic testing kit, gained marketing approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

Although hepatitis D is less common than other types of the viral disease, the new diagnostic testing kit has a potential market in Taiwan's 3 million hepatitis B patients, as hepatitis D only occurs in people who are infected with hepatitis B.

Physicians often recommend that hepatitis B patients be tested for hepatitis D, as its presence would hamper treatment with nucleotide analogues.

Patients who have contracted hepatitis B and D are also more likely to develop liver fibrosis.

Testing for hepatitis B, C and D has been included in the National Health Insurance system to prevent patients with chronic disease from contracting further superinfections, as well as sudden onset of the acute form of the diseases.

Liver cancer, which has a higher prevalence rate among hepatitis patients, has become the second-most deadly cancer in Taiwan.

## **Diabetes patients getting younger, risk blindness (2018/2/11)**

Young Taiwanese are increasingly developing type 2 diabetes due to a high-calorie diet and frequent consumption of sugary drinks.

That younger people are contracting diabetes is worrying eye doctors, because it might precipitate retinal disorders or exacerbate existing ones.

Diabetes' effect on eyesight is severe and nearly irreparable.

Excessive blood sugar levels harm blood vessels and bleeding from damaged retinal capillaries causes vision loss, while insufficient blood supply could cause retinal necrosis or fragility in affected areas.

Fragile retinal areas are more susceptible to repeated bleeding and could create scar tissue that further degrades vision or causes retinal detachment or breakage, conditions that result in partial or total blindness.

Many young people with diabetes do not mind their diet or blood sugar level, which increases the risk of blindness or vision loss from conditions such as retinal disorders, cataracts, glaucoma or others.

The risk of retinal disorders is reduced by strictly controlling the blood sugar level. Patients should listen to their doctors, take their medication on time and ask for professional advice regarding diet and lifestyle.

The number of people aged 18 and older with diabetes has increased at a rate of 25,000 people per year, while an estimated 11.8 percent of the nation's total population — about 2.28 million people — have diabetes.

## **OxyContin maker to stop pushing opioids to doctors (2018/2/12)**

The maker of the powerful painkiller OxyContin said it will stop marketing opioid drugs to doctors, bowing to a key demand of lawsuits that blame the company for helping trigger the current drug abuse epidemic.

OxyContin has long been the world's top-selling opioid painkiller.

The OxyContin pill, a time-release version of oxycodone, was hailed as a breakthrough treatment for chronic pain when it was approved in late 1995. It worked over 12 hours to maintain a steady level of oxycodone in patients suffering from a wide range of pain ailments.

However, some users quickly discovered they could get a heroin-like high by crushing the pills and snorting or injecting the entire dose at once.

## **China plans to clean 90% of polluted farms (2018/2/6)**

China will try to make about 90 percent of its contaminated farmland safe for crops by the end of 2020 and will also restrict development on a quarter of the country's territory.

China would conduct a detailed investigation into soil pollution and launch pilot zones that would be used to test soil pollution prevention and treatment technologies.

A 2013 survey showed about 3.33 million hectares of China's farmland — an area the size of Belgium — was deemed too polluted to grow crops, with estimated clean-up costs amounting to 1 trillion yuan (US\$159 billion).

China declared war on pollution in 2014, trying to head off public discontent and reverse the damage done to its skies, rivers and soil by more than three decades of breakneck growth.

China would also aim to cut the amount of "below grade V" water — water unfit even for industrial use or irrigation — to less than 5 percent by the end of 2020.

Improving the quality of drinking water is also one of the major priorities in coming years and China would ensure that more than 80 percent of its water is grade III or better — fit for human consumption — by the end of the decade.

Other cities would also be under pressure to cut 2015 rates of PM2.5 — fine particulate matter measuring 2.5 micrometers or smaller — by 18 percent by the end of the decade.

## **Removal of carbon dioxide 'no silver bullet' (2018/2/2)**

Technologies to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to help tackle global warming only have limited potential and more effort should be made to reduce emissions.

Proposals to use climate technologies, ranging from spraying sun-dimming chemicals high above the Earth to capturing and storing carbon dioxide underground, have been gaining more attention as the urgency to act on climate change mounts.

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, world governments have agreed to limit global warming to well below 2°C above preindustrial levels, but a large gap remains between nations' emissions plans and the reductions needed.

The European Academies' Science Advisory Council, formed from the national science academies of EU members, has reviewed scientific evidence about several options for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere with so-called negative-emission technologies.

Examples of such technologies include the direct capture of carbon dioxide and trapping it underground (carbon capture and storage); afforestation and reforestation; land management to increase and fix carbon in soils; and ocean fertilization.



The council, which advises European policymakers, said these technologies have “limited realistic potential to remove carbon from the atmosphere” and not at the scale in some climate forecasts, such as several gigatonnes of carbon each year after 2050.

Their deployment on a large scale would also involve high economic costs and have major impacts on terrestrial or marine ecosystems.

“Technologies capable of taking out CO<sub>2</sub> [carbon dioxide] from the atmosphere are certainly no silver bullet — a point that should drive policymakers to renewed efforts to accelerate emissions reductions.”

However, the world will need all possible tools to limit warming and some of these technologies can make contributions to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere even now, while further research, development and demonstration might allow others to make a limited future contribution.

While some technologies for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere could have a role to play in reducing climate change, all have drawbacks making them difficult to use on a large scale.

## **Global cancer survival rate up (2018/2/1)**

Cancer survival is increasing across the world, but large gaps endure between nations, while some cancers remain hard to treat everywhere.

The progress, and the gap, are especially large for childhood cancers, according to the CONCORD-3 study covering 71 nations and 18 types of cancer.

For children with brain tumors, for example, five-year survival has improved across the board from 54 percent for the period 2000-2004, to more than 60 percent for 2010-2014.

In the US, Denmark, Sweden and Slovakia, the survival rate progressed to 80 percent or better, but in Mexico and Brazil, less than 40 percent of children diagnosed with brain tumors survived in the 2010-2014 period.

Similarly, five-year survival for the most common type of childhood cancer — acute lymphoblastic leukaemia — rose to higher than 90 percent in Canada, the US and nine European countries, but remained below 60 percent in China and Mexico.

This likely reflects the availability and quality of diagnostic and treatment services.

For women diagnosed with the disease in the US and Australia from 2010 to 2014, five-year survival was 90 percent. In 16 western European nations, the rate improved to 85 percent, and stood at 71 percent for eastern European nations. In India, breast cancer survival improved during those five years to 66 percent.

Liver and lung cancers remain quick killers in both rich and developing countries, but the past 20 years have seen some progress.

From 1995 to 2014, liver cancer survival increased in South Korea (from 11 to 27 percent), Sweden (5 to 17 percent) and Portugal (8 to 19 percent).

Similarly, lung cancer survival went up by 5 to 10 percent in 21 nations, including the UK. The most progress was seen in China (from 8 to 20 percent), Japan (23 to 33 percent) and South Korea (10 to 25 percent).

Pancreatic cancer remained highly lethal everywhere, with five-year survival rates typically under 15 percent.

Greater international efforts are needed to understand the risk factors for this rapidly lethal cancer.

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Similarly, lung cancer survival went up by 5 to 10 percent in 21 nations, including the UK. The most progress was seen in China (from 8 to 20 percent), Japan (23 to 33 percent) and South Korea (10 to 25 percent).

Pancreatic cancer remained highly lethal everywhere, with five-year survival rates typically under 15 percent.

Greater international efforts are needed to understand the risk factors for this rapidly lethal cancer.

## **Doctor points at three symptoms of deteriorating eyes**

**(2018/4/10)**

A doctor has urged the public to pay attention to dry eye syndrome, presbyopia and eye floaters, saying that the symptoms are signs that the eyes have begun to deteriorate. Hormonal changes during menopause can lead to dry eye syndrome in women.

Eye floaters can occur when the vitreous gel that fills the eyeball degenerates and pulls on the retina, resulting in acute vitreous detachment. Eye floaters can easily be spotted by looking at a blank surface. The lens of the eye starts to lose elasticity after the age of 40, leading to presbyopia as the eyes gradually lose the ability to focus on closer objects and small print.

Eyes are the first organs to develop in the human body and the quickest to deteriorate. People usually start to have problems associated with the aging of their eyes after the age of 55. However, due to the excessive use of electronic devices, these symptoms have over the past few years begun to appear at an earlier age.

Aging of the eyes is unavoidable, but people can delay these symptoms by regularly eating green vegetables, yellow fruits and foods rich in lutein, docosahexaenoic acid and other nutrients that are beneficial to the eyes, as well as by engaging in outdoor activities and reducing the time spent looking at electronic devices.

## **Tedros key to WHA participation (2018/4/9)**

One critical factor in whether Taiwan will be invited to this year's World Health Assembly (WHA) as an observer is the attitude of WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that Taiwan has yet to receive an invitation to the 71st WHA, to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from May 21 to May 26. It has officially asked its diplomatic allies to petition the international organization on its behalf.

Taiwan's diplomatic allies and friendly nations, including international organizations from the US and European nations, have voiced support for Taiwan, and on World Health Day sent a letter to Tedros, proposing to invite Taiwan to the WHA in 2018.

However, Tedros seems to have a pro-China attitude and has been dodging the issue, which might weaken Taiwan's chances of being invited to the WHA this year.

Tedros has served as minister of health and minister of foreign affairs in the Ethiopian government, and has advocated universal health coverage.

However, he also has a pro-China leaning, so he has not come to a decision on whether Taiwan should be invited to the WHA.

High-ranking officials from Taiwan-friendly nations have also approached him on the issue, but were met with a response citing the "one China" policy, UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 and WHA Resolution 25.1.

## **Hospital staff most trusted of public sector employees**

**(2018/4/8)**

Public hospital staff members were considered the most upright and ethical public sector employees from a list of 26 different professions, a public opinion survey conducted by the Agency Against Corruption (AAC) found.

The telephone survey, which was conducted in June in 2017 and published last month, interviewed 1,106 randomly chosen people who rated public employees on a scale of one to 10, with one being most corrupt and 10 most upstanding.

After the results were collated, public hospital staff received an average score of 6.55, followed by civil servants with 6.17, supervisory staff with 6, fire prevention inspection staff with 5.94, police with 5.84 and military service personnel with 5.83.

Education administrators dropped from fifth in 2016 to seventh.

Employees in the judicial system, including prosecutors and judges, ranked in the middle of the list, at 13th and 18th, respectively.

Government procurement agents, township representatives, city and county councilors, legislators and land development agents were found to be the five least trusted public employees in descending order.

## **Number of child abuse cases on the rise (2018/4/4)**

On the eve of Children's Day, children's welfare groups unveiled figures that suggest that the sexual exploitation of children and abuse cases have been on the rise over the past four years.

The groups said they would be jointly founding the Alliance for the Establishment of a Central Government Agency for the Welfare of Children and Adolescents.

According to data provided by the groups, 263 children were reportedly sexually exploited in 2014, but there were already 357 victims in the first half of 2017.

Child abuse cases have increased by 73.4 percent in just four years to 59,912 last year from 34,545 cases in 2013. Child welfare affairs being distributed among different government agencies has proven inefficient.

With the nation's birthrate in the bottom three in the world, we have few enough children already, and yet on average there was a telephone call about a child abuse case every 10 minutes last year.

The wages paid to pediatricians in southern Taiwan are disproportionate to the amount of work required and as a result the willingness of pediatricians to remain practicing is dwindling. If pediatricians leave to work in China, it is possible that Taiwan would suffer a shortage of doctors.

## **Lack of money, work hours keep birthrate low (2018/4/3)**

Inadequate finances, inability to buy a home and long work hours are the three major reasons for Taiwan's low birthrate. The survey found that 63 percent of office workers aged 20 and above who responded to the poll had no children and of those, 48 percent did not plan to start a family.

In answering a multiple-choice question about why they did not want children, 66.3 percent of those respondents said they were worried about earning enough to raise a child, 42.2 percent said they could not afford to buy a home for a family and 28.9 percent said they were too busy with work.

Other reasons cited were dissatisfaction with the nation's education system (23.5 percent) and concerns about serious social problems and the effect on children (21.9 percent). The survey results show the nation's low birthrate is related

to not only low salary levels, pay freezes and long working hours, but also high housing prices, the educational environment and social order.

The survey also found that respondents believe it takes an average monthly household income of about NT\$102,210 to raise a child: NT\$108,435 in the six special municipalities and NT\$86,971 in other cities and counties.

Based on those findings, the best way for the government to boost the birthrate would be to increase the minimum wage and call on companies to raise salaries through industrial transformation, while working to improve social welfare and social security.

## **Doctors dispel rumors on subject of instant noodles**

**(2018/4/3)**

One doctor spoke recently about rumors concerning food additives, addressing concerns that even occasional consumption of instant noodles is harmful to the body.

The Food and Drug Administration does not permit the use of preservatives in the noodles themselves. If seasonings contain preservatives, this must be clearly indicated on the packaging.

Most instant noodles are preserved through dehydration, using a high-temperature deep-fry process, boiling or steaming to kill bacteria.

Rumors that instant noodles take up to 32 days to leave the body are not based on any scientific research. A resident gastroenterologist said that a healthy person will generally digest food within one day.

What is absorbed by the liver is processed by the body right away. It is not very likely that something would stay in the body for 32 days. Only if there is something that the liver really cannot process would it build up in the body.

There is just not enough nutrition in instant noodles, and the seasonings are very high in sodium, oil and calories. People who occasionally eat instant noodles should use less of the included seasonings and add their own vegetables, eggs or meat to enhance their nutritional value.

## **Nation's '10 coolest technology start-ups' focus on AI, VR and healthcare (2018/4/1)**

The Ministry of Science and Technology hailed the nation's "top 10 coolest technology start-ups" — five of which are developing artificial intelligence (AI) — and said that their aggregate funding has reached US\$608 million.



The 10 start-ups were selected out of 122 candidates by 22 industrial experts and investors. The ministry hoped to inspire innovation in local businesses with the selection.

The nation's cumulative strength in local industries, such as semiconductor manufacturing, integrated circuit (IC) design and "smart" machines paves the way for it to participate in the booming AI industry and AI is also the key to the nation's industrial upgrade.

In June, the ministry would open a "business incubator base" at the Taipei Arena, named the Taiwan Tech Arena, at which foreign incubators are to help local entrepreneurs explore new business models.

## **Doctors say not to panic over coffee cancer scare (2018/4/1)**

Taiwanese doctors called for the public to remain calm while responding to reporters' questions on a ruling by a Los Angeles judge that Starbucks Corp and other coffee sellers must now put cancer warnings on coffee sold in California. Starbucks and other companies had failed to show there was no significant risk from a carcinogen produced in the coffee roasting process.

The culprit is a chemical produced in the bean roasting process that is a known carcinogen and has been at the heart of an eight-year legal struggle between a tiny nonprofit group and big coffee companies.

The Council for Education and Research on Toxics wanted the coffee industry to disclose the danger with warning labels. The coffee industry, led by Starbucks Corp, said the level of the chemical in coffee is not harmful and any risks are outweighed by the benefits.

Chang Gung Memorial Hospital toxicologist Yan said that although the International Agency for Research on Cancer has classified acrylamide as a class 2A substance — probably carcinogenic to humans — there is not sufficient evidence that the substance increases the risk of cancer in humans. The public should remain calm and not panic.

Acrylamide is present not only in coffee beans, but also in french fries, hash browns, chips and cigarettes. An acceptable daily intake of acrylamide is 2.6 mg per kilogram of body weight. However, as acrylamide is a byproduct of cooking, it is difficult to measure the amount a person ingests per day.

Acrylamide is the product of a chemical reaction between amino acids and reducing sugars in food, which is called the Maillard reaction, and only occurs when the food is heated at more than 120°C. Even if coffee contains acrylamide, research has proven that coffee consumption helps lower the risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer.

As one 150ml cup of drip coffee contains 110mg of caffeine, a 60kg adult male should not drink more than three cups a day, while a 50kg female should not drink more than two. Consuming too much coffee can cause heart palpitations, increased blood pressure and an increased heart rate.

Eating less deep-fried or baked foods, sticking to a balanced diet and exercising regularly, is the key to good health.

## **Targeted therapy lung cancer drug a first for Taiwan**

**(2018/4/1)**

DPBR112, the first targeted therapy drug for lung cancer to be researched in Taiwan, has an estimated market value of NT\$5 billion (US\$171.7 million) per year, and could be approved for market launch within five years, the Ministry of Science and Technology said.

Sixty percent of patients with non-small cell lung cancer, who comprise 85 percent of lung cancer patients nationwide, require treatment via targeted therapy.

First-generation targeted therapy medication, such as Iressa and Tarceva, has been deemed ineffective, as patients' easily develop a tolerance to them, and second-generation drugs, such as Afatinib, produce side effects.

Lung carcinoma patients in Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and China have a 50 to 60 percent higher chance of developing epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) gene mutations.

Four percent of EGFR gene mutations are identified as EGFR exon 20-mutated lung cancer, while another 4 percent develop human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2) mutations. Available targeted therapy options abroad are unable to treat both mutation types.

The research team tested the drug against multiple mutated proteins and found that DBPR112 performs well in suppressing effects of wild-type EGFR and its mutated variants, and the team also found that DBPR112 has a higher oral absorption rate.

Once DBPR112 launches, patients around the globe would be able to benefit from better targeted therapy medication. Patents for the drug have been applied for and approved in Taiwan, the US, China, Japan and South Korea.

## **Society urges hypertension patients to take their drugs**

**(2018/5/10)**

People who take medication for hypertension should not reduce their dosage without a doctor's approval, as it could damage some organs.

A survey conducted by the Health Promotion Administration (HPA) from 2013 to 2015 showed that 94 percent of young people with hypertension do not measure their blood pressure at least once per week.

The survey also showed that more than half of people with hypertension have reduced their prescribed amount of medication or even stopped taking it.

About 80 percent did not know that poor control of blood pressure could harm various organs, and that the top three organs they are most afraid of damaging are the brain (36 percent), the heart (28.7 percent) and the eyes (22.9 percent).

Numerous studies have suggested that a person's risk of developing cardiovascular disease doubles when their blood pressure increases by 20 millimeters of mercury (mmHg) on the systolic pressure reading or 10mmHg on the diastolic pressure reading.

Poor control of blood pressure could lead to complications, such as cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, vision loss, hearing loss and limb ischemia.

## **Uterine fibroids linked to menstrual issues (2018/5/10)**

A woman's prolonged menstrual periods were caused by a uterine fibroid that had slipped into her cervix. Each month, her menstrual period would last from 10 to 20 days, during which she would experience dizziness and discomfort. The condition began to seriously affect the woman's quality of life.

After seeking medical attention at a hospital, she was diagnosed with a uterine fibroid and a doctor recommended removing the entire uterus.

The cause of uterine fibroids is still largely unknown.

One in four women could develop the fibroids and about half to 70 percent of people with uterine fibroids are unaware of their condition.

Most people do not seek medical attention until symptoms, such as irregular bleeding, menstrual pain, abdominal pressure, bladder problems and anemia appear. Doctors recommend women to receive a pelvic ultrasound exam every year.

## **CDC declares end to confirmed cluster measles outbreaks (2018/5/9)**

A number of clustered measles outbreaks that were first confirmed in late March have come to an end, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

There have been 24 confirmed cases of measles this year, including three clustered cases.

A total of 8,456 people were put on a watch list by local health departments after coming into direct contact with the confirmed cases.

The clustered cases linked to Tigerair were the largest clustered outbreak in the nation in a decade.

The CDC asked airlines to have their employees receive measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccines, and so far more than half have been vaccinated.

There are about 11,000 shots of MMR vaccine available for people who want to be vaccinated at their own expense and about 4,000 shots would be distributed to hospitals with higher risks of infection.

The CDC urged healthcare practitioners to ask patients about their travel history, occupation, contact history and possible exposure clustered outbreaks when handling patients with suspected measles symptoms.

## **Taipei offers bonus for taking cancer-screening exams (2018/5/8)**

Eligible female residents who have not taken the government-funded mammography and Pap smear tests in the past two years will receive a NT\$100 cash reward on their EasyCards if they get both exams at collaborating clinics and hospitals before June 30, the Taipei Department of Health said.

Cancer has been the leading cause of deaths in Taipei for 45 consecutive years and Health Promotion Administration (HPA) data from 2015 showed that breast cancer was the most common cancer among female Taipei residents, with the incidence rate increasing to 87.46 per 100,000 people.

Breast cancer can be caused by genetic or environmental factors.

The HPA data suggest that 38 percent of breast cancer cases can be prevented by avoiding environmental factors, such as smoking, drinking alcohol, an unhealthy diet, mental stress and lack of exercise.

Another common type of cancer is cervical cancer.

Peggy Chen, a pediatrician at the city hospital and Taipei cancer ambassador, said that after she was diagnosed with cancer, she learned how to slow down and lead a healthier lifestyle, keep a balanced diet and a healthy weight, exercise and have regular health checkups.

Preventing the onset of cancer is more effective than getting treatment after a positive diagnosis. Urging women to be aware of their health conditions and take cancer screening regularly.

## **Doctors promote hand hygiene after salmonella case (2018/5/6)**

Physicians at National Taiwan University Hospital (NTUH) urged the public to wash their hands after handling raw eggs and fresh vegetables to prevent salmonella infection. The swelling and fever were due to salmonella sepsis.

Raw eggs might carry salmonella and people should wash their hands after handling them. Salmonella is spread through contaminated meat, milk, eggs and manure.

Salmonella bacteria can grow at an accelerated rate and spread quickly in high temperatures. Symptoms, which include

nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, a fever and stomach pains, usually manifest within six to 48 hours.

Salmonella bacteria can enter the body via wounds or through the mouth. It reproduces quickly in babies, elderly people or individuals with chronic illnesses, such as diabetes.

For good hand hygiene, people should lather soap on their palms, the back of their hands and between their fingers for 20 seconds before rinsing.

When using alcohol sanitizer, people should have two or three milliliters of sanitizer on their hands and wash them for up to 15 seconds.

## **Doctors warn of fatty liver risks (2018/5/3)**

A survey has found that 94.1 percent of Taiwanese with fatty liver disease do not think it affects their lives or health, while 38.1 percent of people with the disease eat out for most of their meals.

Many people are fond of eating lunchboxes, which are usually high in calories and fat content, as well as hot pot and stir-fried rice and noodles.

About one in every four adults in Taiwan has fatty liver disease, 30 percent of whom developed the condition from alcohol use, while obesity and diabetes led to contraction of the disease for about 70 percent.

Because fatty liver disease usually shows little to no symptoms, many patients neglect it, which risks its development into steatohepatitis (fatty liver hepatitis), cirrhosis or even liver cancer.

The best way to reduce fat in the liver is to lose weight and exercise more.

While eating out, people should choose to eat more vegetables or seaweed, which are low in calories, but high in dietary fiber, replace red meat with low-fat chicken or fish and eat fruit after meals.

## **HPA urges public to pay attention to asthma risks (2018/5/2)**

About 5.1 percent of Taiwanese have been diagnosed with asthma. The public should pay attention to asthma risk factors in their homes.

World Asthma Day, launched by Global Initiative for Asthma in collaboration with the WHO, is observed on the first Tuesday of May every year to raise public awareness of the disease that affects about 235 million people worldwide.

The theme for this year's Asthma Day was "Never too early, never too late. It is always the right time to address airways disease. Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases in the world.

Asthma is characterized by recurrent attacks of breathlessness and the symptoms of wheezing, panting, chest tightness and coughing.

Sometimes no clear symptoms are detected, but a sudden attack can be triggered when the person is ill or exposed to stimulants or allergens, or drastic weather changes.

The five most common causes of asthma attacks in children are exposure to dust mites, drastic weather changes, viral infection, iced drinks or frozen food and air pollutants.

It urged people with asthma to pay attention to the risk factors at home that can trigger an attack, including bedding that has not been washed in two weeks, stuffed animals that have not been washed in a week, pet fur, tobacco smoke, iced drinks or frozen food and unstable indoor temperature.

Dust mites are the most common allergen in the home environment. Washing bedsheets and stuffed animals every one or two weeks and leave them to dry in the sun can kill dust mites. Not placing rugs or carpets can also prevent dust mites.

In addition, people with asthma should avoid exposure to stimulants, such as secondhand smoke and perfume. They should wear a surgical mask when outdoors to prevent inhaling air pollutants, such as nitrogen oxides and sulfur oxides, and also avoid quickly inhaling dry, cold air when entering an air-conditioned environment.

## **Ministry warns about herbal remedies (2018/5/1)**

The Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW) urged the public not to take herbal remedies without prescription from a licensed physician.

In light of the incident, the ministry's Department of Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy issued a press release, telling people to be cautious about taking herbal remedies, because they often have complicated ingredients and could cause health damage.

Studies have shown that long-term intake of aristolochic acids, found in certain plants commonly used in Chinese herbal medicine, can increase risks of kidney damage. The ministry in 2003 banned five types of plants that contain aristolochic acids.

The ministry urged people to seek medical advice from licensed physicians, purchase herbal medicine from licensed dealers and not take medications with exaggerated advertising claims or without required government approval.

## **Taichung child covered in rashes, diagnosed as HSP (2018/5/1)**

What appeared to be mosquito bites on a six-year-old girl in Taichung turned out to be Henoch-Schonlein purpura (HSP), a disease that could require hemodialysis in severe cases.

HSP is not uncommon, but its Mandarin name suggests it is an "allergy," it is an autoimmune disease. HSP is caused by an overreaction to infections by the body's immune system, resulting in systemic vasculitis and the

appearance of purple spots, mainly on the legs and buttocks.

Other symptoms include abdominal pain; vomiting; pain and swelling in the joints; and subcutaneous edema.

HSP is most common in children aged five to 11 and affects parts of the body with large numbers of small blood vessels, including the skin, gastrointestinal tract, kidneys, joints, respiratory tract and central nervous system.

While the cause of HSP is unknown, most people contract it one to two weeks after catching a cold due to a continued immune response.

While the symptoms usually subside on their own within eight weeks, if they are severe from the onset of the disease, there is a 15 percent chance the illness might damage the kidneys and require hemodialysis. In half of the cases, HSP recurs within six weeks.

The appearance of small rashes scattered across the body should not be taken lightly; this symptom occurs in the early stages of many diseases.

## **Polio, measles making comeback in Venezuela (2018/6/11)**

Polio has been reported in Venezuela, where the disease had been eradicated decades ago; the country also accounted for a majority of measles cases in the region.

Polio, or poliomyelitis, is a crippling childhood disease caused by the poliovirus, and preventable through immunization.

Venezuela, devastated by economic and political crises, also accounted for 85 percent of measles cases reported across Latin America and the Caribbean over the past year.

## **Take eye ‘blackouts’ seriously, doctor urges (2018/6/7)**

The public should be wary if they experience sudden eye “blackouts” or blurry vision; marathon runners suffered eye strokes due to extreme dehydration.

An eye stroke is caused by the occlusion of retinal veins in the center of the retina, which may lead to edema of the macular region. The blurry vision, or even possible loss of sight, is due to lack of oxygen to the photoreceptor cells in the retina.

The reason behind eye strokes is unknown, and could be due to age or chronic hyperglycemia, hyperlipidemia and hypertension.

Two percent of people over the age of 40 suffer from various degrees of branch or central retinal vein occlusion and some have suffered an eye stroke because of dehydration.

Strenuous exercise should be accompanied by ample rehydration. People in high-risk groups — those over the age of 60 or suffering from the three “hypers” — should immediately visit a doctor if they experience a sudden loss of or blurry vision.

## **FDA warns against increasing use of sedative propofol**

**(2018/6/7)**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) urged people to ensure that a certified anesthetist who can safely administer sedatives is present before signing an anesthesia consent form, as misuse of sedatives can lead to death.

While more clinics are using the term “comfortable-sleep” for patients undergoing an invasive examination or surgical procedure, the FDA said the term usually means being sedated with propofol, an intravenous anesthetic agent that makes the patient fall asleep rapidly.

Propofol is an opaque, white fluid, colloquially called “milk white injection” in many clinics. It has been classified as a class four controlled drug in Taiwan since 2015, after several people died from propofol misuse around the world, including Michael Jackson.

Propofol is widely used for sedation because it works rapidly and afterward, patients feel like they have woken from a comfortable sleep, unlike the feeling they would get from other sedatives.

However, as propofol only works for a short duration, sometimes an accidental overdose of injections during the examination or surgery can cause a patient to stop breathing and result in death.

## **Fly brain study could help with human disorders (2018/7/18)**

A research team at Academia Sinica announced its findings on research into a protection mechanism in the brain cells of flies, which might shed light on treatment of human neurological disorders.

By studying the olfactory local interneurons of *Drosophila*, a genus of fly, the research team identified a model system to investigate the pathological changes and death of neurons through genetic screening.

Stimulating the fly larvae with certain neural signals, the team found some of their interneurons underwent cell death, while others remained unaffected and grew into the neurons of adult flies, which led the team to uncover a protection mechanism in the brains of the flies.



As the mechanism might be used to prevent unwanted cell death, the research might shed a new light on treating human neurological disorders, such as Parkinson's disease. However, more research is needed before a new drug could be developed to activate the mechanism.

## **Allergies can lead to black rings, eye wrinkles(2018/7/15)**

Seasonal allergies could cause black circles and wrinkles around the eyes. Allergy-related nose blockages could impede circulation in the nasal cavity and affect the subcutaneous tissue around the eyes.

Lacking oxygen, blood in the subcutaneous tissue could take on a dark hue, forming black circles, while allergies cause eye and nose discomfort, and could prompt habitual scratching, which over time forms wrinkles.

Although some believe allergies are more prevalent in autumn or winter, the onset of summer brings with it humidity, dust and mites, and people experience temperature shifts when moving between outdoor and air-conditioned environments, which are known allergy triggers. Certain types of allergies, such as the ones that cause black circles, have subtle, hard-to-detect symptoms.

To reduce allergy risks in summer, people should regularly launder their bed sheets and blankets to reduce dust and mites.

Deep-fried or cold foods should be avoided, while foods that Chinese medicine considers to be "neutral," such as spinach, corn, pumpkin, bean sprouts, apple, papaya, string bean, chicken, and common and Chinese cabbage, should be increased.

Allergic episodes occur when the immune system responds to allergens, which causes histamine to be released.

## **Doctor advises musicians to sterilize instruments (2018/7/14)**

A pulmonologist has advised musicians to sterilize their instruments with rubbing alcohol following each use after a music student developed hypersensitivity pneumonitis from inhaling mold in her trumpet.

Since instruments accumulate saliva during use, they can develop mold if they are not cleaned and dried thoroughly. When a musician plays the instrument, they inhale and exhale mold, which causes allergic symptoms and respiratory discomfort, and could trigger disease.

People normally stop playing their instruments for a period of time if they feel unwell or lack energy, making it difficult to identify the allergen.

## **Childhood absence epilepsy often goes undetected**

**(2018/8/27)**

A pediatric neurologist warned of the risk of childhood absence epilepsy. In cases of absence epilepsy, the brain suddenly “freezes” or “crashes” like a computer.

The onset of absence epilepsy is usually between ages 4 and 10, peaking at 5 to 6-years-old and the prevalence of absence seizures among people with epilepsy is about 10 percent.

Parents need to pay close attention to their children because seizures are often accompanied by a loss of awareness.

During seizures, if the child is sitting and immediately recovers, then there is no danger; however, if seizures are accompanied by automatism, the situation could pose some risks. The cause of absence epilepsy is typically genetic.

Absence epilepsy is primarily treated by regularly taking anti-seizure drugs and avoiding triggers, such as anger, anxiety, tiredness or stress; setbacks and emotional issues.

If symptoms do not improve by adulthood, absence epilepsy has a 90 percent chance of developing into more serious types of epilepsy.

## **Certified hospitals offer better cancer treatment (2018/8/27)**

Fifty-eight hospitals nationwide have Cancer Treatment Quality Accreditation, offering a higher standard of care.

Patients who have just been diagnosed with cancer often panic and do not know what to do, and some might turn to folk remedies or refuse treatment and care, afraid that it could impose a heavy economic burden on their families.

The accredited hospitals have changed their approach, from physicians in different departments treating cancer independently to forming specialized medical teams and integrated care services.

Accreditation requires that hospitals have standard operating procedures for chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgeries; monitor drug prescription and administration for safety; and have cancer case managers, nutritionists and psychologists on hand to assist physicians in communicating with patients.

More than 80 percent of cancer patients are treated at the 58 accredited hospitals, and the five-year survival rate at these hospitals increased from 50 percent between 1994 and 1998 — 10 years before the program began — to 56 percent between 2011 and 2015.

## **Doctor warns over excess potassium after kiwifruit case**

**(2018/8/26)**

A doctor warned people with chronic kidney disease to control their intake of potassium, which can result in potentially fatal illnesses if consumed in excess.

Foods high in potassium can put a potentially fatal burden on the kidneys of those with chronic diseases, citing the case of a man who was rushed to an emergency room after eating a lot of kiwifruit.

Potassium is important for the body, assisting with neural activity and muscle contraction, as well as regulating heartbeat. Potassium enters the diet largely through fruit and excessive potassium leaves the body of a person with normal liver functionality through urination.

However, in a person with an unhealthy liver, the excessive potassium makes its way into the bloodstream, which can bring about hyperkalemia.

In the initial stages of hyperkalemia a person might experience muscle fatigue, trembling and a lack of physical strength. As the condition progresses, it can affect the heart's rhythm, possibly even leading to heart failure.

Those with chronic kidney problems should limit their consumption of fruit high in potassium, such as citrus fruit, grapes, bananas, watermelon, papaya, dates, strawberries, loquats, kiwifruit, cantaloupes, peaches and tomatoes.

People with kidney problems should avoid eating raw vegetables, which often contain high levels of potassium. It is advisable to boil vegetables for three to five minutes, or drink vegetable soup, and starchy vegetables — such as potatoes, taros, pumpkins and yams — should be eaten in moderation. Low-sodium salt or soy sauce, coffee, strong tea, juice and foods that use chicken stock, such as chicken soup, should also be avoided.

## **Sunglasses do not protect eyes from e-displays (2018/9/11)**

Sunglasses do not protect people's eyes from the blue light emitted by electronic devices. Some light, such as infrared light and ultraviolet light, are invisible, while others, such as red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple, are visible.

Blue light is a stronger type of visible light that can pass through the cornea and lens and arrive directly in the macula, damaging photoreceptor cells and resulting in early onset of macular degeneration.

Excessive viewing of electronic devices at a close distance is the main reason Taiwanese are developing myopia — or nearsightedness — at a younger age and high myopia is a major cause of blindness.

Sunlight and blue light from LED lights are both stronger than the blue light from electronic displays. While people usually do not look directly at sunlight or LED lights, the blue light from electronic devices directly enters the eyes, causing long-term damage.

Most sunglasses can only block out ultraviolet rays. Glasses that do reduce blue light exposure have a special coating that reflects 20 to 40 percent of blue light and yellow-tinted lenses can also filter out blue light.

Photochromic lenses that block out ultraviolet light and blue light simultaneously are on the market and the lenses can be used indoors and outdoors.

## **As suicide rate increases, center urges intervention**

**(2018/9/10)**

Suicide rates have increased slightly over the past three years and an estimated 1.3 percent of Taiwanese older than 15 have considered suicide in the past year.

About 800,000 people worldwide die of suicide each year. Suicide became Taiwan's 11th biggest cause of death. The suicide rate last year was higher for men than for women.

Suicide is a complicated issue and requires the help of everyone, especially when society perpetuates the stigma surrounding suicide and mental illness, making people afraid to seek psychological counseling or medical attention.

The government and civil groups would continue to work together to help more people understand suicide prevention, urging people to show more concern, listen to those around them and refer depressed people to seek treatment.

"In suicide prevention, everyone is a gatekeeper," and everyone can help prevent suicidal behavior by practicing "ask — respond — refer."

People must "ask" the person who is emotionally distressed or depressed if they are thinking of harming themselves, "respond" by encouraging and staying with the person, and "refer" the person to professional counseling or medical treatment.

## **Doctor says strokes increasing among people under 45 with family history (2018/9/10)**

Young people with a family history of strokes have a higher risk of having one and should have regular medical checkups. Most of these younger people come from families with a medical history of strokes, have a diet high in sugar and fried foods, and do not exercise regularly.

Such people should measure their blood pressure regularly and exercise, which reduces the stroke risk by improving the flexibility of cerebral blood vessels.

Headache and dizziness are early warning signs of a stroke, while difficulty speaking, drooping on one side of the face, or impeded mobility or loss of consciousness are indications that a stroke has already occurred.

## **US, Japanese pair win Nobel prize for cancer research (2018/10/2)**

Two immunologists, James Allison of the US and Tasuku Honjo of Japan, won this year's Nobel Prize in Medicine for research into how the body's natural defenses can fight cancer.

Unlike more traditional forms of cancer treatment that directly target cancer cells, Allison and Honjo figured out how to help the patient's own immune system tackle the cancer more quickly.

The award-winning discovery led to treatments targeting proteins made by some immune system cells that act as a "brake" on the body's natural defenses, killing cancer cells.

In 1995, Allison was one of two scientists to identify the CTLA-4 molecule as an inhibitory receptor on T-cells. T-cells are a type of white blood cell that play a central role in the body's natural immunity to disease.

Allison "realized the potential of releasing the brake and thereby unleashing our immune cells to attack tumors".

At about the same time, Honjo discovered a protein on immune cells, the ligand PD-1, and eventually realized that it also worked as a brake, but acted in a different way.

## **CDC urging flu shots for over-50s, pregnant women (2018/10/2)**

With the government-funded influenza vaccination program set to begin on Oct. 15, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) urged people aged 50 and above to get vaccinated.

Taiwan's flu season usually begins in November and then peaks during the Lunar New Year holiday the following year.

Flu can lead to serious complications, including pneumonia, encephalitis myocarditis and even death.

People aged 65 or above and those aged between 50 and 64 are at high risk for serious complications from flu infections. Flu vaccination is currently the most effective method to prevent flu infection.

People with chronic diseases aged 50 and above, pregnant women and preschool children older than six months have a higher risk of developing serious flu complications and are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as the program begins.

Flu vaccinations are a high priority for expectant women. Getting a flu vaccination not only protects a pregnant woman and her fetus, but also the baby after it is born. There have been many scientific studies showing the vaccinations are safe for pregnant women.

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