

**TICK BORNE ENCEPHALITIS –  
INCREASING NUMBER OF CASES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

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In spite of very good overall epidemiological situation in the Czech Republic Tick Borne Encephalitis (TBE) belongs to very few infectious diseases with rising trend of incidence.

TBE is considered to be serious disease with possible life-long sequelae for an infected person and practically no treatment available up to now.

Laboratory confirmed cases have been reported in the Czech Republic since 1971. Peaks of incidence occurred at 2 to 5 year intervals. TBE appears in traditional highly endemic areas of the Czech Republic mostly not related to large city agglomerations however afflicting the major recreational areas not only jeopardizing local people but mostly leisure time activities of major cities citizens during weekends and holidays. This is the reason why map of the place of infection and place of reporting the disease can differ substantially.

Particularly worrying and emerging are the rising numbers of TBE in the last two decades regardless to availability and accessibility of the only efficient way to prevent the disease: vaccination. There is a significant difference in immunization coverage rates between the Czech Republic and Austria what influences directly occurrence of TBE.

Current vaccination policy in the Czech Republic seems to be not effective enough to eliminate the disease or at least to keep it on the lowest possible sustainable numbers. Strategy to immunize only people with professional exposure under public health programme accompanied by irregularly occurring programmes of various insurance funds for their insurees like on TBE/FSME shot free of charge did not fully solve the problem.

Mass immunization against TBE in the Czech Republic is one of possible solutions however up to now probably not feasible regarding to the costs for state budget and only moderate risk for people not entering endemic areas. Possible substantial increase in immunization coverage is limited due to the fact that in comparison to other countries the total vaccination costs have to be covered by the vaccinee him-/herself.

Full coverage of all the risk groups with relation to endemic areas is the only way to decrease too high occurrence.

