

Safe and Sound

Formerly, I never thought that Taiwan's and university's preventive measures during Covid would be so relevant to me because epidemic prevention process should be similar everywhere in the world according to the standard medical procedures. But my thoughts have changed since I got the Taiwanese Medigen vaccine on August 25, 2021.

Although Taiwan's vaccine reservation system is entirely Chinese, and I am a Thai Ph.D. student with a little Chinese language skill as I have studied at the NCHU Language Center, it was not a hindrance. The vaccine reservation went smoothly thanks to the department's staff and my advisor's assistance.

And then came the day of vaccination. I was fully aware of the risks of vaccination. But I did not think I am the unlucky one. I got pretty bad adverse effects the night after the immunization. Fortunately, I had a friend who took me to the hospital. Then I was hospitalized urgently because of severe wheezing and a pounding heart. The doctor made me stay in the hospital for two days due to the serious malfunction in my heart. I was so scared because I had never been to a hospital in Taiwan before, and my rudimentary Chinese language was unable to cope with the severe situation, so I could not communicate with the doctor understandably. All of these circumstances had heightened my dread and panic, which had mostly supplanted my rationality.

But then my worries have been healed because in a short time at the hospital I received a lot of phone calls and texts showing concerns. Those emails and phone calls from NCHU staff came in uninterrupted. The exhaustion from the illness turned into a feeling of surprise that my advisor and the staff were concerned about me. Their warm words and caring gestures soothed my heart's concerns. I was so surprised because I only reported my illness to my advisor. But with a warm heart of Taiwanese people, the advisor and staff immediately contacted the International Student Affairs Office (OIA) of NCHU to assist me, and I later learned that the advisor had assisted all communication to the university. Throughout the hospitalization procedure, all NCHU member's compassion and assistance helped to alleviate my worries about my health and the Chinese language barrier.

The OIA promptly informed my situation to Thai friends and quickly contacted me to provide their support. They also offered me a number of different social media networks dedicated to health assistance, as well as other useful information. Honestly, these supporting systems or channels are something I never thought I would use before. Or, I never even thought they have existed which surprised me and strengthened my confidence at the same time. At this moment, a sense of security and gratitude erodes the worries I once had. I could sense the positive energy that the professor and staff gave me when I was confronting hardships that I could not describe in any language.

During my hospitalization, I came to realize NCHU's strong cooperation and communication system between departments and international students. However, this is less essential than the care that my advisor, staff, and friends at NCHU gave me. To use a metaphor, if the supporting system of NCHU is like a big tree, the kindness of professors and staff is like a river. For me, no matter how good the supporting system is, it would mean nothing if the system was not nurtured by the true benevolence and sincerity of the people. As a result, NCHU represents the roles of both the huge tree and the river, offering a sense of safe and sound that I never expected to experience while studying in Taiwan.

Finally, if I may, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my advisor, OIA staff, and friends for their assistance throughout this life-threatening crisis.

