



## Influenza: Common cold

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### Description

Influenza is also called as common cold. It is caused by influenza virus, there are four types of influenza viruses like A,B,C,D. Influenza B and C are commonly found in humans whereas influenza A is found in birds and Influenza D is found in animals such as cattle and pigs.

Influenza symptoms ranges from mild to severe if not treated, generally the symptoms are like fever, running nose, cough, sore throat, muscle pain, head ache and fatigue. This symptom generally begins from day 1-4 after the entry of the virus into the upper respiratory tract [1,2]. The severe symptom of Influenza leads to other complications such as meningitis, acute respiratory distress syndrome and asthma. Influenza may progress to Pneumonia which is caused primary viral infection and secondary bacterial infection.

The influenza which is a viral infection is transmitted from the infected to the person in contact. As it is a communicable disease it is transmitted through the droplets from cough and sneezing of the infected. The mild symptoms can be treated with oral medication like the anti-histamines which cause a slight sedation leading the body to rest of the infected. Anti-histamines like cetirizine is used for runny nose, itchy eyes, watery red eyes caused due to influenza i.e. common cold [3,4].

Cetirizine which is an anti-histamine H1 receptor antagonist they inhibit the peripheral H1 receptors and possess mast cell stabilization.

Influenza in age criteria, it is not as easy to consider as common cold, it is severe in the pediatric and geriatric patients

- Patients with cardiac disorders
- Patients with chronic health conditions
- Patients with severe lung diseases like asthma and bronchitis
- Patients with renal diseases

Some of the diseases caused due to the influenza are like bacterial pneumonia, it worsens the condition like chronic heart disease, it asthmatic patients [5].

Bacterial pneumonia is fatal in pediatrics as it can cause to death of the patient. Bacterial pneumonia starts with the common symptoms like fever, cough and cold and if not treated with proper medication like the NSAIDS and Anti biotic it leads to the surgical procedure for the removal of the sputum formed in the alveoli of the lung. The surgical procedure of the removal of the fluid from the lung is called Thoracentesis [6].

Generally the oral NSAIDS like paracetamol syrup is given with the combination of an expectorant as primary treatment for expelling the sputum and phlegm from the lung, if the symptoms do not reduce to the minimal then the patient is sent for the diagnostic procedure like the sputum test, blood tests, X-ray, pulse oximetry for the further diagnosis.

Depending on the diagnostic result the second line medications or the surgical procedures are used.

In second line medication they are generally used in adults in case of pneumonia, whereas in infants the diagnosis of pneumonia is a bit severe to treat as the immune response to medications is low. In that case if the symptoms are severe like the secondary symptoms are developed like the hypoxia, pale lips, dehydration, loss of appetite depending on the oxygen levels of the patient the supply of oxygen is increased if required the patient is kept on ventilator for the further surgical procedure of Thoracentesis [7,8].

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