

DELHI UNDER THE WEATHER

There's now a nip in the air and you may be reaching out for the geyser in the morning. Also, be on guard against viruses

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Delhi and other parts of NCR is witnessing a sharp increase in viral fever cases, thanks to sudden change in weather. According to doctors, current weather is conducive for transmission of viral infections. They say that 30-40% of the OPD cases are of viral fever and related infections.

"There has been a two-fold increase in viral fever cases, especially in children. Nearly 40% of the cases in the OPDs are of viral fever or infections," said Dr Sanjeev Bagai, head of the department, paediatrics and director, Rockland Hospital. A majority of people are down with viral fever, which can be treated symptomatically, but doctors say with dengue cases on the rise, fever shouldn't be taken lightly. "Cases like high-grade fever with pain in eyeballs, bodyache etc for more than 24-hours should be taken to doctor, as it could be dengue,"

said Bagai.

The weather is said to be conducive for viral infection. There are fluctuations in day and night temperatures too. "Exposure to change in temperature can be dangerous. But this happens every year and one just needs to take precautions and avoid crowded places. Children should be more careful. With schools reopened, parents should be careful, as kids move in close groups and chances of getting infected are higher," said Dr G C Vaishnava, head of the department, internal medicine, Fortis Healthcare.

For asthma patients, this weather can aggravate the medical condition, as there is a lot of pollen movement in the air. "This is a tough season for asthma patients, as mild-allergy can aggravate breathing difficulty. Moreover, constant change in temperature and humidity also makes things worse for asthma patients," said Dr Mukesh Mehra, head of the department, internal medicine, Fortis Healthcare. Apart from complaints of cough and cold, along with fever, are

very common. "We are seeing a lot of cases of upper respiratory track infections. Viruses like rhino virus are responsible for such infections. It is better to cover your face, especially when exposed to dust," said Dr Ashutosh Shukla, head of internal medicine, Artemis Healthcare Institute.

Doctors say that the coming season is going to be tough for people with compromised immunity, as they are at a greater risk of contracting secondary infections. "People with diabetes and other lifestyle diseases or elderly people can contract secondary infection if their viral infections are not treated on time. We are seeing cases of viral pneumonia in elders as a secondary infection. In such cases, it can get serious. People with compromised immunity should be proactive in seeing a doctor at the initial stages as adequate steps need to be taken to control the problem," said Dr Tarun Sahni, senior consultant, internal medicine, Indraprastha Apollo.

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Graphic: Pratima

COLD FACTS VIRAL SPIRAL

At this time of the year, viral fever is the most common disease. Doctors at city hospitals say that nearly **30-40%** of the patients coming to OPDs nowadays suffer from viral

Common diseases of the season

- Viral fever
- URT infections (viral & bacterial)
- Influenza
- Dengue
- Viral Hepatitis
- Viral pneumonia (especially in

Symptoms which say you are down

- Moderate to high fever
- Persistent cold and cough
- Headache
- Bodyache
- Lack of energy or lethargy
- Vomiting
- Muscle pain

The reasons for your illness

- Sudden change in temperature which makes you vulnerable
- Fluctuating day and night temperature
- The pollen in the atmosphere
- Changes in

The viruses that are active

- Rhino virus is the most common viral infective agent, causing 30-50% of all cold cases
- Varicella virus
- Virus causing respiratory infection

Precautions

- Go to a doctor if high fever for more than 24 hrs
- Asthmatics should cover face
- People with diabetes, high BP etc should not take risk as chances