

7 harmful misconceptions about the flu that can put your life in danger

Flu is just a bad cold, no flu symptoms are not contagious, antibiotics are flu medicine... These are the misconceptions about flu that many people have, even though recently, the press and mass media have been flooded with information about seasonal flu.

Influenza is one of the most common infectious diseases, but the truth is that in the midst of a flu outbreak, many of us still misunderstand this disease.

Flu is just a bad cold

Most cases of the flu clear up on their own in 2-7 days without medical intervention. This is what makes many people think of the flu as just a bad cold. However, while most people recover without complications, some cases can become serious.

The flu is caused by an influenza virus, which is different from the common cold. Although the flu and a cold have many similar symptoms, flu symptoms usually come on more quickly and you are more likely to have a high fever, fatigue, headache, muscle aches, cough, chills, and a feeling of being hot and cold.



Influenza not only causes discomfort and affects the quality of life, but can also lead to dangerous complications such as pneumonia, sepsis, respiratory failure, myocarditis, otitis media and sinusitis. Of which, pneumonia is the most common and serious complication. Influenza virus attacks the respiratory tract mucosa, creating conditions for bacteria to invade, increasing the risk of secondary infection. For example, if a patient is infected with influenza virus and pneumococcal bacteria at the same time, the risk of death can be 8 times higher than

with influenza alone. Some groups of people at high risk of flu complications include: People over 65 years old; People with underlying diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, etc.; Pregnant women; Children under 5 years old.

Get the flu to get your immune system used to it.

Many people believe that getting the flu can strengthen the immune system by 'training' the body to fight off the disease. This is another misconception about the flu. When you get the flu, your body only produces antibodies that provide short-term protection, but you are still at risk of getting reinfected with other strains of the virus. Furthermore, the immune system does not always maintain optimal protection, especially for older adults, pregnant women, or people with underlying health conditions. Chronic stress can also weaken the immune system, making the body more vulnerable to the flu virus.

Additionally, there is no scientific evidence that influenza infection will help the immune system function more effectively, so we should not assume that influenza is a beneficial challenge for the immune system.

Flu can be detected without flu test? ?????

Prof. Dr. Phan Trong Lan (Director of the Central Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology) affirmed that distinguishing influenza from other respiratory diseases can only be accurately determined through testing. Influenza has symptoms such as fever, cough, body aches, headache, and stuffy nose similar to many other respiratory infections, so it is difficult to recognize by common symptoms.

For accurate test results, the appropriate time to take a sample is about 2-3 days after contracting the disease. During this period, the concentration of influenza virus in the body is usually the highest, increasing the possibility of accurate detection. If the test is performed earlier, the influenza virus may be in the incubation period, the concentration of the virus is not enough to detect, leading to inaccurate test results.

Healthy people do not need a flu vaccine or do not need to get one every year .

Health experts confirm that influenza can cause complications in healthy people without underlying diseases. Studies show that people who have been vaccinated against influenza have a 26% lower risk of being admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) and a 31% lower risk of dying from the flu than those who have not been vaccinated.

Therefore, although the risk of complications is low, healthy people can still get the flu and spread it to those around them. In addition, vaccination helps create 'herd immunity', helping to limit the spread of the virus, indirectly protecting those who have not been vaccinated or cannot be vaccinated, such as infants and people with vaccine allergies. At the same time, reducing the transmission of the flu virus is valuable in reducing the rate of infection in places where close contact with others in public environments is unavoidable, such as hospitals, schools, etc.

Also, remember that influenza viruses are constantly changing. This is why the flu vaccine is updated every year to match the strains currently circulating. Therefore, to protect yourself from influenza and its dangerous complications, you need to get a flu vaccine every year. The ideal time is before the flu season (October-December).

No symptoms , no infection? ??

Even if you feel well, most adults infected with the flu virus can infect others even before they develop symptoms and up to 7 days after they have 'collapsed' from the flu. Therefore, you should practice the following two civilized habits to prevent catching or spreading the flu: If you feel unwell, rest at home, avoid crowded places to prevent spreading the virus to others. If you have flu-like symptoms, always wear a mask and cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. During flu season, you should especially remember these two things.

Antibiotics are drugs to treat flu?

When having the flu, people should not buy antibiotics on their own because antibiotics are ineffective against the flu and have many harmful effects in this case - said Dr. Dong Phu Khiem - Deputy Director of the Intensive Care Center, Central Hospital for Tropical Diseases.

Antibiotics only kill bacteria and have no effect on influenza viruses. Antibiotic abuse increases the risk of drug resistance. People should also not take antiviral drugs, such as Tamiflu, to treat influenza on their own because these drugs must be taken under a doctor's prescription.

Eating a balanced diet and taking vitamin C supplements is enough to 'resist' the flu .?

While good nutrition supports the immune system, it does not prevent the flu virus. The most effective way to prevent the disease is to get a flu vaccine every year and develop healthy habits in daily life such as washing hands frequently and wearing a mask in public places.

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