Seasonal flu spikes, who needs to get tested?

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The death of actress Barbie Hsu, 48 years old (Taiwanese, Chinese) was caused by flu complications, making many people more concerned about the danger of this disease.

The incident once again warns that seasonal flu is not just a mild cold, but can cause unfortunate consequences if not prevented and treated promptly.

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Doctor examines flu patient being treated at Bach Mai Hospital. Photo: Thuy Anh

Flu increases due to weather?

The Department of Preventive Medicine (Ministry of Health) said that with the typical winter-spring weather, the monsoon climate, dry and humid (especially at this time in the northern provinces), is a favorable condition for pathogens to spread through the respiratory tract such as influenza and diseases transmitted from animals to humans.

Currently, at some hospitals such as the Central Hospital for Tropical Diseases, the Tropical Disease Center (Bach Mai Hospital) are treating many cases of flu in severe and critical condition. Some patients have to undergo ECMO intervention (artificial heart-lung).

Unlike the common cold, flu can be more severe and manifest more clearly with sudden and severe symptoms such as high fever of 39-40 degrees Celsius, chills and sweating, sore throat, dry cough, headache, muscle or body aches, fatigue and weakness.

Dr. Nguyen Trung Cap, Deputy Director of the Central Hospital for Tropical Diseases, said that many people have experienced seasonal flu and most of them have a mild course, with fever, illness for a few days and then recovery. However, there is still a small percentage that has a severe course, leading to death.

"There are three strains of influenza A, B and C, of ??which influenza A is the most common. People with the flu will have a fever for a few days, body aches, then gradually improve and recover. However, people with underlying diseases, immunodeficiency, organ transplants. should go to the hospital because they can easily develop serious complications. People with normal flu who find it difficult to reduce fever and feel unusually tired should go to the doctor to check if there are any other problems besides the flu," Dr. Cap noted.

In addition, people should not buy antibiotics on their own because antibiotics do not work against flu and have many harmful effects in this case.

8 flu deaths in 2024? ? ??

Testing is considered the standard for diagnosing influenza.

In Vietnam, according to statistics from the Ministry of Health, in 2024, there were 289,876 cases of seasonal flu and 8 deaths; the number of cases decreased by 17.9% compared to 2023 (353,108 cases), the number of deaths increased by 5 cases.

In 2024, the country recorded 4 deaths from influenza A/H1N1 in Binh Dinh, these were cases with severe chronic underlying diseases, no virus variants were recorded.

Some provinces and cities recorded high numbers of flu cases such as: Thanh Hoa (46,600 cases), Thai Binh (more than 26,300), Nghe An (nearly 18,000), Ha Tinh (more than 14,000), Son La (more than 10,100).

According to Mr. Hoang Minh Duc, Director of the Department of Preventive Medicine (Ministry of Health), influenza is dangerous because it spreads quickly and causes epidemics. The disease can occur at many different levels: pandemic, epidemic, small local epidemic and sporadic cases.

Therefore, when people have symptoms of cough, fever, runny nose, headache, fatigue, they should not arbitrarily do tests and buy medicine to treat at home but should contact a medical facility for timely advice, examination and treatment. In addition, annual flu vaccination is the most effective way to prevent the disease.

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