

## **Influenza**

With beginning of winter, all people start to think about influenza disease which causes many symptoms that affect their performance. Influenza is a transmitted viral disease that affects respiratory system.

### **What are the symptoms of this disease?**

- Sudden fever (39 – 40<sup>0</sup>C), which persists for 3 days.
- Headache.
- Dry cough which differs in severity from one person to another. This cough may cause chest pain.
- Cold sores & pharyngeal pains with increase in nasal secretions.

### **How do you relieve symptoms of influenza?**

- Use antipyretics and analgesics.
- Eat foods enriched with vitamin C.
- Take soups.
- Take herbal tea such as camomile & anise.

### **What is the ideal treatment of influenza?**

No efficient treatment is available for influenza because the causative viruses vary every year. Thus, the best treatment is prophylaxis by vaccination.

### **What is flu vaccine?**

Flu vaccine contains killed causative viruses. This vaccine stimulates the immunity system of the patient to produce antibodies against the most common causative viruses during winter season.

### **Who should be vaccinated?**

- Old people over 50 years and older.
- High-risk medical conditions, people with low immune system, diabetics, asthmatics, and who have chronic disorders of the heart, lungs and blood.
- Pregnant women.
- People who work at hospitals.
- All children from 6 months till 2 years.
- Care givers of high-risk old people or young children.
- Frequent travelers.

**If I took the shot; will I get the flu??**

No, flu vaccine is very safe, because the viruses in the vaccine are already dead. Yet some people may catch a cold a week or two after immunization, and usually this is not related to the vaccine. But as any medication, flu vaccine has some side effects like swelling and soreness where you get the shot, and it goes away within a day or two.

**If I took it last year; shall I repeat it this year??**

Yes. Because these viruses vary from year to year, so in order to be protected you should receive the shot every year.