



## ETIOLOGY, SPREAD, CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS, TREATMENT, AND PREVENTION OF INFLUENZA

*Turdiyev To'ymurod O'tkir o'g'li.*

*Abu Ali Ibn Sino Bukhara State Medical Institute*

**Abstract:** Influenza is a viral disease and one of the infectious diseases posing significant risks to human health. This illness is particularly widespread during the winter season and can lead to severe complications. Having comprehensive knowledge about the spread, causes, and preventive measures against influenza is crucial for everyone.

**Key words:** Handshakes, mild symptoms, vaccination, Physical activity, viral infection

### **Etiology and Causes of Influenza.**

Influenza is typically caused by influenza viruses, which are categorized into three types: A, B, and C. Among these, type A is capable of causing pandemics. The virus spreads from person to person through airborne droplets. Factors contributing to the development of the disease include cold weather, weakened immunity, and neglect of hygiene standards.

#### **Modes of Transmission**

The influenza virus spreads among people through the following primary routes:

**Airborne droplets:** Through coughing, sneezing, or talking.

**Contaminated surfaces and objects:** Door handles, phones, and other items.

**Direct contact:** Handshakes and close interactions.

### **Clinical Manifestations**

Influenza has an acute onset. Symptoms appear within hours, including fever, cough (usually dry), headache, muscle and joint pain, weakness, sore throat, and nasal discharge. Some symptoms may be absent, but high fever and abrupt onset are



classic indicators of the disease. In contrast, gradual illness with mild symptoms is more likely an acute respiratory viral infection (ARVI).

### **Severe Cases May Include:**

Nausea and vomiting;

Nosebleeds;

Loss of consciousness;

Delirium.

Most individuals recover within a week without treatment. However, in high-risk groups, influenza can lead to severe complications and even death.

### **High-Risk Groups**

Children under two years old;

Elderly individuals over 65 years;

Pregnant women;

Individuals with chronic conditions such as heart, lung, kidney, liver diseases, blood disorders, or diabetes;

Immunocompromised individuals (e.g., those with HIV).

### **Treatment of Influenza**

Treatment approaches continuously evolve as the influenza virus mutates and becomes resistant to previous vaccines. Current treatments include:

Antipyretics;

Antiviral drugs;

Decongestants;



Expectorants and cough suppressants;

Multivitamins;

Herbal infusions and inhalation therapies;

Immune-boosting medications;

Antihistamines.

Patients are advised to consume liquids rich in vitamins and fruit-based infusions. Bed rest is particularly recommended for children.

### ***Vaccination***

Vaccination is the most effective measure against influenza. Annually updated vaccines help develop immunity to different strains of the virus. Doctors recommend vaccination, especially for high-risk groups such as children, pregnant women, and the elderly.

The World Health Organization (WHO) strongly recommends annual influenza vaccination for:

Pregnant women at any stage;

Children aged six months to five years;

Elderly individuals (65 years and older);

Patients with chronic conditions;

Healthcare workers.

In Uzbekistan, free vaccinations are provided based on epidemiological indications. Vaccines are primarily offered to children with severe cardiovascular diseases or those frequently ill. Professionals with high exposure to people are also vaccinated during epidemic conditions.



### **Types of Influenza Virus:**

The influenza virus has three types: A, B, and C. Type A viruses are further subtyped based on surface protein combinations. Among the variants, A (H1N1) and A (H3N2) are the most prevalent. Identifying dominant strains is crucial for selecting vaccines before the onset of an epidemic.

### **Contraindications for Vaccination:**

Infants under six months old;

Severe allergic reactions to previous vaccines or components;

Acute stages of any illness (vaccination should be postponed but not canceled).

Pregnancy and lactation are not contraindications. Modern vaccines are safe for pregnant women and their babies, providing protection against severe disease.

### ***Personal Hygiene***

Adhering to hygiene practices significantly reduces the spread of the virus. Washing hands with soap and water, wearing masks in crowded areas, and covering the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing are effective preventive measures.

### ***Additional Prevention Strategies***

Strengthening the immune system through proper nutrition, vitamin intake, and physical exercise;

Avoiding stress and ensuring adequate sleep;

Maintaining social distancing in crowded places.

### **Healthy Lifestyle and Prophylaxis**

A healthy lifestyle plays a pivotal role in preventing influenza. Providing essential vitamins and minerals through a balanced diet strengthens immunity. Vitamins C and D are particularly beneficial.



Physical activity, with at least 150 minutes of exercise weekly, boosts immune function. Adequate sleep and stress reduction also significantly contribute to prevention.

Maintaining distance in crowded places, using personal protective equipment, and taking precautions in public transportation are also advisable.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Preventing influenza depends on individual responsibility for health. Vaccination, hygiene, and a healthy lifestyle are effective methods to combat influenza. Timely vaccination, immune system strengthening, and adherence to preventive guidelines can help maintain health.

Research by doctors and scientists confirms that while no single approach guarantees protection, a combination of measures provides the best results. A healthy lifestyle and preventive measures serve as reliable shields against all diseases, including influenza.

Taking personal responsibility by getting vaccinated, observing hygiene rules, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle can prevent influenza. Consulting a doctor and taking appropriate measures in time also reduces complications. Healthy habits and prevention are essential for protection against diseases.

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