



# PREVENTION OF RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS

A health talk by  
Resolution Health in the interest  
of your health and well being.





# Objectives

- Definition
- Components
- Common Respiratory Tract Infections
- Causes
- Signs and symptoms of Colds and Flu
- Treatment
- Prevention





# Definition

- The respiratory tract is a general term that is used to describe all the parts of the body that are involved in helping a person to breathe. Health professionals generally make a distinction between:
  1. Upper respiratory tract, and
  2. Lower respiratory tract





# Upper Respiratory Tract

Consists of:

- the nose,
- the sinuses - air-filled cavities that are found inside the cheekbones and forehead,
- the mouth (including the tonsils),
- the throat,
- The ear and its components





# Upper Respiratory Tract

- the pharynx - which is at the back of the throat and prevents foreign objects, such as food, falling down into the lungs, and
- the larynx or 'voice box' - which is the part of the throat that contains the vocal cords.





# The Lower Respiratory Tract

Consists of:

- the trachea (windpipe) - the tube that connects the throat to the lungs,
- the bronchi - the two branches that the trachea divides into as it enters the lungs,
- bronchioles - the tiny airways that are found throughout the lungs, and
- the alveoli - tiny air sacs at the end of the bronchioles.





# Upper Respiratory Tract Infections(URTIs)

- the common cold, Flu (commonest URTI)
- Pharyngitis - usually due to an infection of the pharynx (sore throat),
- tonsillitis - infection of the tonsils,
- sinusitis - infection of the sinuses, and
- laryngitis - infection of the larynx.
- Ear infections





# Lower Respiratory Tract Infections

- bronchitis - infection of the bronchi, and
- pneumonia - infection of the bronchioles and alveoli.





# Incidence

- Respiratory tract infections are very common.
- They are one of the leading reasons why people visit their GP or pharmacist.
- Account for more than 35% of the total outpatient claims costs





# Causes

- More than 80% of all URTIs are caused by viruses- Rhino viruses, influenza virus RSV,
- 15% are due to bacterial infections- S. pneumonie
- Spread via respiratory droplets





# Flu Vs Common Cold

Flu	Common Cold
Caused by <b><i>Influenza viruses (A&amp;B)</i></b>	Causes by <b><i>Rhino Virus</i></b> (over 200 varieties)
Affects the whole body: e.g. joint pains, fever, fatigue.	Mainly affects the nose.
You feel very sick	Rarely makes you feel sick: have a running/ blocked nose.
Occurs suddenly	Occurs over several days
There is a vaccine	No vaccine





# Symptoms of a Cold

Develop 1-3 days after a cold virus enters the body:

- runny nose, congestion
- sneezing
- reduced taste and smell
- scratchy throat
- Cough





# Symptoms of a FLU

- Occurs suddenly!
- Fever.
- Headache.
- Muscle and Joint pains.
- Running nose, sore throats and cough.
- Fatigue
- Diarrhoea & Vomiting esp. in children





# Risk Factors for the FLU

- **Any one can get the FLU**
- Those at **INCREASED** risk:
  - An infant(< 1 year) or young children.
  - Adult above 50 years.
  - Those with long standing diseases e.g. asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney & heart disease.
  - Those with weak immune systems e.g. HIV,steroids
  - Pregnancy





# When to see the Doctor

- Not all Flu infections require you to visit a Doctor.
- All those with increased risk should see a Doctor once they develop the flu.
- When you get symptoms of pneumonia:
  - Productive cough with phlegm, blood
  - Pain in the chest when taking deep breaths
  - Persistent symptoms > 5days





# Treatment for Colds & FLU

- There is no cure for colds and flu
- Pain Killers & Fever Relievers
- Decongestants and expectorants (not recommended for children)
- Antiviral medication( onset of symptoms within 2days)
- Antihistamines.





# Home Remedies

- **Drink Plenty of fluids:** Boosts immunity and replenish the lost fluids
- **Rest:** boosts immunity.
- **Chicken soup:** known to relieve congestion
- **Honey/ginger :** soothes the throat and helps with the cough
- **Analgesics** for fever and body aches.
- **Steam inhalation**





# Prevention of the Cold & Flu

- Good Hygiene: Wash hands
- Sneezing and coughing into tissues and not handkerchiefs. This will help prevent the virus-containing droplets from your nose and mouth entering the air where they can infect others. Throw away used tissues immediately before washing your hands,
- Avoid stress
- Exercise and eating balanced meal to boost your immunity





# Prevention Cont'd

- Well ventilated rooms
- Quit smoking
- Flu Vaccine:
  - Not a cure: Reduces the risk of getting as well as the severity of the flu
  - Administered annually: why?
  - 2 types: nasal and injection





- flu Vaccine is recommended for people who are 65 years of age, or over, or for those with:
- a serious heart problem, such as heart failure, serious asthma, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD),
- long-term kidney, or liver disease, diabetes, or
- a weak immune system- HIV or AIDS, chemotherapy.





# FAQs on the FLU

- Is the FLU vaccine safe in children?
  - Yes from 6 months old
- Is the FLU vaccine safe in pregnant women? Yes
- Does the vaccine prevent the FLU totally? NO
- Why is the FLU vaccine given annually?
- Do I need antibiotics to treat the FLU? NO





# Questions??





**Thank You**

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My Resolution**

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