

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Seasonal Influenza

➤ Guidelines on categorization of Seasonal Influenza cases during screening for home isolation, testing, treatment and hospitalization (25.02.2019)

Influenza (also known as flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. People who have influenza like illness (ILI) may present with following symptoms listed in box 1.

Cardinal symptoms of Influenza like illness

- ILI – an acute respiratory infection (sudden cough and sore throat) with measured fever of ≥ 100.4 F; with onset within the last 10 days

Other associated symptoms

- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children than adults)
- Running or stuffy nose

Box 1: Clinical symptoms in influenza

All individuals seeking consultations for flu-like symptoms should be screened at healthcare facilities, both Government and private or examined by a doctor and categorized into A, B and C. In order to prevent and contain outbreaks of Influenza, the following guidelines for screening, testing and isolation are to be followed:

Category- A (uncomplicated/mild):

- *Symptomatology:* Patients **with mild fever and cough/ sore throat** with or without body aches, headache, diarrhea and vomiting will be categorized as Category-A.
- *Diagnostic test:* **Testing of such patients (Category-A) for Influenza is not required**
- *Treatment:* They do not require Oseltamivir and should be treated for the symptoms mentioned above. The patients should be monitored for their progress and reassessed at 24 to 48 hours by the doctor
- *Isolation:* Patients should confine themselves at home and avoid mixing up with public and high-risk members in the family

Category-B (uncomplicated but severe symptoms / high risk groups):

- B1. In addition to all the signs and symptoms mentioned under Category-A, if the patient has high grade fever (≥ 102 F) and severe sore throat
- B2. In addition to all the signs and symptoms mentioned under Category-A, individuals having one or more of the following high-risk conditions (box 2):

1. Age ≥ 65 years
2. Pregnancy (including up to two weeks post-partum)
3. Infants and Children aged ≤ 5 years (especially < 2 years of age)
4. Chronic respiratory disease
5. Chronic heart, kidney, liver or neurological disease
6. Diabetes mellitus
7. Blood disorders (including haemoglobinopathies)
8. Persons with immunosuppression (including HIV/ AIDS & use of long-term (≥ 2 weeks) corticosteroids, Post-transplant patients)
9. Extreme obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²)
10. Malignancy

Box 2: People at high risk for influenza complications

- **Diagnostic test:** Testing of the Category-B patient for Influenza is not required
- **Treatment:** They should receive Oseltamivir along with symptomatic treatment.
- **Isolation:** All patients of Category-B (i) and (ii) should confine themselves at home and avoid mixing with public and high-risk members in the family.

Category-C (Complicated):

- **Symptomatology:**

In addition to the above signs and symptoms of Category-A and Category-B, if the patient has one or more of the following:

Table 1. Symptoms and signs of complicated influenza

<u>Symptoms</u>	<u>Signs</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Breathlessness2. Hemoptysis3. Altered mental status4. Somnolence and Poor feeding (in children)5. Seizures6. Decreased urine output7. Persistence or worsening of initial symptoms beyond 72 hours8. Worsening of underlying chronic conditions like Diabetes Mellitus, Chronic Kidney Disease etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tachypnoea2. SpO₂<90%3. Hypotension4. Reduced urine output5. Cyanosis

- **Diagnostic test:** These patients should be tested for influenza; start empirical antiviral therapy (oseltamivir) while results are pending
- **Treatment:** immediate hospitalization and treatment.