

A flu

Author:

José Cristóbal Buñuel Álvarez . Pediatra. ABS Girona-4 (Girona).

Translated by: Pablo Ocaña Escolar.

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The information that everybody see and have concerning A flu is sometimes alarming and can make parents and children feel scared. The aim of this article is to inform about this illness using known data.

Flu has always existed. Then, how has A flu become so important?

There has always been flu. The difference between A flu and standard flu (the so-called seasonal flu) is that the virus which causes it is new. This means that the population has no defense and can easily suffer from this illness.

Nevertheless, is it A flu more serious than seasonal flu?

From its advent in April 2009, A flu is widely known. Winter has gone by in the countries from the south hemisphere and thus, it has been checked that A flu is not more serious than seasonal flu.

What does human pandemics mean?

The Word human pandemics does not imply that A flu has been spread all over the planet. Nonetheless, the spread is not related to its seriousness.

Taking into account the symptoms, can we distinguish between A flu and seasonal flu?

A flu and seasonal flu cause the same symptoms. It is not possible to make a difference. The symptoms are widely known: high fever, cough, sore throat, nasal mucosity and in elder boys it can cause headache and muscular pain. Flu (both kinds) can sometimes cause abdominal pain and diarrhea. Furthermore, we need to bear in mind that the symptoms of both flus are common in other respiratory infections. In fact, the existence of fever, cough and nasal mucosity is one of the most frequent reasons to visit the doctor.

What should I do if my child has these symptoms?

The above described symptoms are very frequent in children, specially babies. A two-year-old baby can have up to 7-8 respiratory infection in winter months with one or some of the above described symptoms. The best thing to do is to keep calm since we know that in most cases these infections get cured on their own. If fever causes discomfort, paracetamol or ibuprophen can be given. The boy should always be hydrated (water and juices).

If a child has problems to breathe, breathe quicker as usual, does not feel well and fever has not diminished alter some days, it is advisable to visit the paediatrician so that other infections can be avoided. If you have any question before that time, it is advisable to call your paediatrician. Most of the questions regarding flu or other viral infections can be thus answered.

Is there any vaccine against A flu? Shall my child get vaccinated?

The European Agency of Medicine has just tested two vaccines for children and adults. Vaccination is recommended for children who belong to a high risk group (following the instructions of the Health Department). These high risk groups are the same than with seasonal flu: children with serious chronic diseases (cancer), heart and lung patients (fibrosis, serious asthma, heart diseases) or children with metabolic diseases which can be more serious because of flu (as diabaetes)

Is there any medicine that cures A flu?

Nowadays there is no medicine which "kills" flu virus. Anti-viral medicines only shorten the amount of days of the symptoms (between 0.5 and 1.5 days less) for children. Its use is reduced to the above mentioned high risk groups. In these groups, the decision to use medicines depends on the seriousness of each case.

Do antibiotics cure A flu?

Antibiotics are not useful to treat any illness caused by a virus but can be helpful to treat some of the problems caused by flu in some children. The flu virus can weaken the defenses and make easier that other bacteria cause another illness (pneumonia for instance). Hence, antibiotics can cure this pneumonia caused by bacteria.

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Sheet for parents

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