

Rains bring cheer, but disease fear looms

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Flashing lightning or pelting rain—the monsoon magic can evaporate with the first sneeze. The flipside of the season is the battle with infection which, doctors say, has surged significantly over the last few days.

Doctors say every second patient visiting hospital OPDs is suffering from flu, gastroenteritis or common cold. Though self-limiting, these diseases prove to be quite a hassle among high-risk groups such as infants and elderly people.

“The hospital is overrun with patients suffering from seasonal illnesses. In some cases involving elderly, we

KNOW THE COMMON MONSOON MALADIES

FLU/COMMON COLD/ VIRAL FEVER

SYMPTOMS | Runny nose, sore throat, cough, fever
Spreads | Over 100 viruses cause it but rhinovirus the most common. Highly contagious, spreads through air droplets of infected person's cough and sneeze



STOMACH UPSET, DYSENTERY

Diarrhoea, stomach cramps
Spreads | Contaminated food, drink and water. Ice cubes can also carry infection. Hepatitis A from close contact with infected person

FOOD & WATERBORNE

Cholera, Typhoid, Hepatitis A

SYMPTOMS

Cholera | Severe diarrhoea, vomiting, muscle cramps, reduced urine. Infected children prone to fever and convulsions

Typhoid | Prolonged fever, abdominal pain,

headache, fatigue, chest and abdominal rashes

Hepatitis A | Fatigue, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, appetite loss, low-grade fever, dark urine, pale stool, yellowing of skin and eyes (jaundice)

MOSQUITOES Malaria, dengue

SYMPTOMS

Malaria | Headache, shiver bouts, recurring fever, muscle pain

Dengue | Headache, shiver bouts, high fever, muscle cramps



have had to admit them for administering supportive care,” Dr Charu Goel Sachdeva, consultant, internal medicine department at Rockland Hospital, said. Elderly and those suffering from secondary health problems like diabetes or cancer need close monitoring to avoid complications including pneumonia, she said.

According to Dr R K Singhal, head of internal medicine at BLK Super-Specialty Hospital, change of season predisposes people towards viral infections. “The body takes time to adjust to changing weather. Eating healthy and maintaining hygiene are the best ways to avoid viruses,” he said.

Aasha Sharma, a resident of GK-II, said everyone in her

family was down with viral fever. She blamed it on humid weather and unsanitary conditions due to overgrowth of vegetation in the vacant plot next door. “At work, colleagues have not turned up for over a week. I too joined after three days of sick leave,” she said.

Viruses are transmitted through the air and by consuming infected food or water, Dr Romel Tickoo, senior consultant internal medicine at Max Hospital, Saket, said. “Common cold, flu and respiratory infections usually spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The best way to avoid catching them is to maintain hand hygiene and stay away from a sick person,” he said.