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With winter chill, flu makes a comeback

New Delhi: With mercury going down, marking the arrival of winter, cases of flu and pneumonia have shown a significant increase in the Capital. The flu virus, which spreads more easily due to lower temperatures and humidity, is affecting an increasing number of people, doctors in the city said.

“Ten to 15 per cent of the patients visiting us are coming with symptoms like fever, cold, pain and influenza since the beginning of last month,” said Prof Randeep Guleria of AIIMS. Echoing his views, Naveen Kishore, Senior Consultant (Pulmonary) of Max Hospital, said there has been a steady 15-20% rise in influenza cases in the Capital, with elderly people and those with weaker immune systems the worst affected. “People who are

65 or above with chronic lung diseases and weak immune systems and those who haven’t had annual flu shots administered are the worst affected,” Kishore added.

Rajesh Chawla, a senior consultant (Respiratory and Critical Care) of Apollo Hospitals was of the view that every year they were “witnessing three times more flu cases as compared to the normal season”. With the mercury set to plummet further, doctors warned that contracting flu can exacerbate problems, leading to pneumonia, asthma and other respiratory allergies. They said preventive mechanisms such as vaccine shots early in the season are the best way to protect oneself against winter-related afflictions. PTI