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After dengue scare, viral fever fear grips Capital

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Capital is witnessing a sharp increase in the number of viral fever cases. Private hospitals claim that the OPD load has increased by 30-35% with a majority of cases presenting with symptoms of viral fever. Due to early monsoon, dengue cases have started coming early and doctors say that people are confusing viral fever with dengue as the symptoms are almost the same.

"Dengue is also a viral infection that is spread through mosquitoes. The symptoms of dengue and other viral infections are almost the same, especially in the initial stages, and people are rushing to hospitals even if they have mild fever. At present, nearly 30-35% patients in our

According to doctors, people are confusing viral fever with dengue as the symptoms are almost the same. Doctors are getting several calls from people, especially mothers, to check if their little one is suffering from dengue or simple viral fever

OPDs comprise viral fever patients. And everyday there are nearly 5-6 admissions, where dengue is suspected," said Dr G C Vaishnava, head of the department, internal medicine, Fortis Healthcare.

Doctors say they are bombarded with calls from people, especially mothers, to check if their little one is suffering from dengue or simple viral fever. "A lot of mothers call me up to say that their little one is down with high-grade fever and ask me 'is it dengue or viral fever?' And what medicine should I give?" This is a wrong practice as prescription over the phone,

Viral Stats

Viral fever refers to a broad spectrum of conditions where viral infections result in fever. These infections may show generalised symptoms, but may target specific organs. Headaches, body aches and a skin rash characterise most of these viral fevers. Some are highly contagious. Most of them are not dangerous and self-limited, but some can progress rapidly leading to death

Causes

Most infections are caused by inhalation of germs or by contaminated food or water

Symptoms

Signs include fatigue, body and muscle ache & fever. Runny nose, redness of eyes and skin rash are also common

Cures

Antipyretic & analgesic drugs are generally prescribed. Adequate bed rest and a lot of liquids are also advised in viral fever

have suddenly shot-up in Delhi. There is viral shift in air and chances of viral infections are high.

"One can get viral infection through respiratory tract or from food and water. One should be extra cautious about what they eat or drink and avoid crowded places, as chances of catching infection are high," said Dr Mukesh Mehra, head of the department, internal medicine, Max Healthcare.

As far as treatment is concerned, doctors say, one should be careful and avoid antibiotics until prescribed by a doctor. "People are getting confused between dengue and viral fever and are randomly popping pills without consulting a doctor. One should, at the most, take paracetamol and not indulge in self-medication," said Dr A

K Bali, consultant physician, Moolchand Medcity.

However, most importantly, doctors say that one should avoid Ibruprofen, Aspirin and Nemusulide, as these drugs disturb the platelet function. "Not only do they result in platelet dysfunction, but also brings down the platelet count, thereby, making it difficult for doctors to diagnose the problem in the initial stages. The symptoms of dengue and viral fever are almost the same and if one has viral fever and has taken a painkiller, then with low platelet count a physician could mistake it for dengue," said Dr Bagai.

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