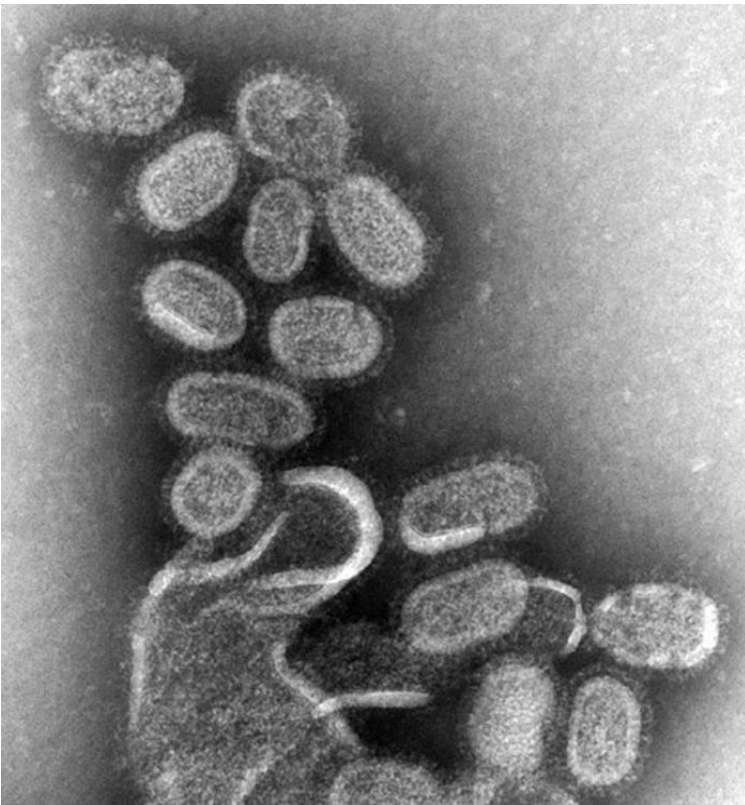


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Understanding Influenza



Influenza is caused by the RNA viruses from the family *Orthomyxoviridae*. It is a disease that can be transmitted by saliva, nasal secretions, feces, blood and through the air, that affects the respiratory tract.

There are three types of Influenza including Influenza-virus A, B and C. Viruses of Influenza A are the most virulent among the three influenza types and could cause severe diseases.

Peak Prevalence of Influenza

In Hong Kong, the peak of influenza attack normally happens in the winter from February to March; and in summer during the rainy days in July.



In the winter, the low temperature and humidity level dehydrate our mucus, which stops our body from expelling the virus particles effectively. Therefore, viruses stay in our body, and causes infection.

In the summer, rainy days often come with high temperature and high humidity. This encourages the reproduction of viruses since they find it easier to survive under the warm and wet conditions.



The Symptoms of Influenza

The major symptoms of Influenza are chills or a chilly sensation. Fever is also a common symptom in the early Influenza infection, which normally with body temperatures as high as 39 °C.

The major symptoms of Influenza are listed in details:

- Body aches, especially joints and throat
- Coughing and Sneezing
- Extreme coldness and fever
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Irritated watering eyes
- Nasal Congestion
- Reddened eyes, skin (especially face), mouth, throat and nose
- Abdominal pain



The differences between Influenza and Common Cold

Both Influenza and Common Cold are caused by virus and their symptoms are similar. People find it difficult to differentiate.

However, Influenza usually last longer than Common Cold and the symptoms are generally more serious. It can worsen the problem of people with chronic health diseases. Influenza can also be fatal, particularly for young children and the elderly.

Below is a comparasion table bwteen Influenza and Common Cold:

| Symptoms | Influenza | Common Cold |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Peak Season | From February to March and July | Non seasonal |
| Incubation Period | Sudden | Gradual |
| Fever | Common, always with high temperature and last for several days | Seldom |
| Cough | Serious sometimes | Common coughing condition |
| Headache | Serious | Seldom |
| Muscle Pain | Serious especially for Back and Legs | Slightly |
| Fatigue | Extremely Fatigue | Slightly but the patient still able to work |
| Weakness | Last for 2 - 3 weeks | Slightly |
| Discomforted chest | Common | Slight to Medium |
| Nasal Congestion | Occasionally | Common |
| Sneezing | Occasionally | Common |
| Sore Throat | Occasionally | Common |
| Period Last | 1 - 2 weeks or even longer | 4 to 10 days |
| Immunity after infection | Strong | Weak |

Possible Preventations

Experts suggest that influenza might be caused by low levels of Vitamin D, which is produced under the skin from UV radiation. This theory is also seen as one possible reason to explain why Influenza always spread in the Winter and in Rainy seasons, as there are less sunlight.



To prevent Influenza, the most important thing is to strengthen the immune system and develop a healthy lifestyle, which include:

- Having sufficient rest
- Developing a Balanced Diet
- Exercising Regularly
- Do not smoke

Vital Impact's Recommendation

Vital Impact understand that simply eating daily meals is not enough to prevent and fight influenza. To prevent Influenza, it is important to build up a strong immune system and to replenish the important nutrients that are missing in our everyday diet through proper supplementation. Therefore, products from **Everyday Health** series are suggested. **Complete** and **Vital Tone** are recommended as they contain various Vitamins, Minerals, and Nutrients that necessary for enhancing our immunity and maintaining vibrant health.

Everyday Health