Influenza or "Flu"

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Preventive Medicine

This highly contagious disease, also called the grippe, is worldwide in extent and was probably known even to Hippocrates. After World War I, from 1918-1920, a form of severe influenza spread over more than half of the world with devastating results. In some communities four out of five people died of the flu. However, in 1957 an epidemic of the same kind of influenza broke out in the Orient, and although hundreds of thousands of persons were affected, most cases were very mild and the epidemic was not at all serious. We do not understand this waxing and waning of the seriousness of disease, but have experienced it with a large number of infectious diseases such as polio, lobar pneumonia, typhoid, mastoiditis, rheumatic fever, syphilis, leprosy, and tuberculosis, among others.

The symptoms of influenza appear rather suddenly from one to three days after exposure. Chills and fever, headache, backache, and extreme malaise are present. The viral infection lowers the resistance of the respiratory tract and exposes the patient to invasion by other germs. Fever lasts from one to five days.

Prevention

Diet: Keep bowels open by the liberal use of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and enough water and exercise to insure a daily bowel movement. Drink at least eight glasses of water daily. Avoid using more than three teaspoons of sugar daily, or two teaspoons of oil as these reduce the effectiveness of the immune system. These concentrated foods dehydrate the blood which also reduces the strength of the immune system.

Clothing: Clothe the extremities so that no part has any chilled skin. Exposing skin to prolonged cold lowers resistance against viral invasion of the respiratory tract, even in the absence of a chilly sensation. Much energy is lost through the skin because of improper clothing.

Exercise: A minimum of half an hour daily of out-of-doors exercise is essential. Get more exercise when under stress.

Rest: Have regular periods of rest daily. Make up lost sleep as soon as possible, preferably in the morning, as afternoon naps may interfere with evening sleep. Rest as a remedy is so simple many people forget to think of it when they start getting sick. A 24-hour rest may be enough to alter the course of an illness and put you on the road to recovery.

Association: Avoid crowds. Any "carrier" of the flu virus who gets closer than four feet can transfer to you the infective dose of virus through talking or coughing.

Hygiene: Avoid eating with people who are finger-lickers. Train household members never to lick fingers or dip into serving dishes with their own silverware.

Wash hands after receiving money, tickets, etc., before eating or touching food. Remember that food handlers, clerks, and cashiers may rub their nose or cough on their hand and immediately touch your purchases - leaving on them heavy loads of viruses. Remember also to wash all purchased fruits before eating. The exterior surfaces of fresh and packaged foods have been exposed to many shoppers who were coughing or talking, leaving droplets of infected material on them.

Treatment

For many different kinds of diseases, including infectious diseases such as flu, there are several simple things you can do to treat yourself. Treatment is aimed at relief of the symptoms and the resolution of any complications. Keep immune mechanisms at a high level of efficiency by the following measures.

Within 15 minutes of the onset of the very first symptoms begin treatments as follows:

Take a hot water gargle for ten minutes at the earliest sign of a sore throat or nasopharynx. Hot water or hot saline water gargles may be continued every one to four hours to relieve pain and promote healing, or as long as the raw or sore sensation lasts.

Besides speeding the healing of a sore throat, hot water gargling also opens up congested ears which may accompany influenza.

Hot saline nasal irrigation can stop a viral infection. Make the saline by mixing one teaspoon of salt in one pint (two cups) of water. Use a water pick or bulb syringe to irrigate the nose while standing over a sink. This treatment is good for hay

fever, a head cold, and sometimes even for a headache. A humidifier can be used for nasal stuffiness. A shop lamp with a 60-100 watt bulb held one to two inches from the nose can open up nasal passages to promote easy breathing.

Take an enema as early as possible after symptoms begin, even if bowel function is normal. Use one quart of hot water for an adult. This may be repeated daily for three to five days.

Sometimes at the very beginning of symptoms, if they can be caught within the first 20 minutes, a warming hot bath for seven to eight minutes, followed by an enema, and a deep breathing exercise can cause the influenza to fail to develop. The deep breathing exercise consists of breathing in through the nose and holding it for 20 seconds and then exhaling through the nose and holding it for ten seconds.

Another deep breathing exercise: At the very first sign of a cold or flu, breathe in deeply, then exhale slowly through the nose. Begin again, inhaling through the nose. Repeat 30 to 50 times. Do this exercise as often as every two hours as long as symptoms persist.

Steam inhalation - This remedy is excellent for respiratory conditions.

It is also a good idea at the very beginning of influenza symptoms to take a long walk. Try to walk at least double the distance usually covered. The benefits of deep breathing and quickened circulation add their healing influence.

Use care to maintain good circulation of fresh air in bedrooms. Air the bedrooms thoroughly during the day by opening the windows wide, even if doors to bedrooms must be closed off. Heat rooms to a temperature no greater than 68 degrees F.

Activated charcoal powder, which adsorbs viruses and reduces inflammation, can be made into a thick paste and held in the mouth to trickle down the throat to soothe and heal a sore throat.

A hot foot bath is effective for most influenza symptoms. Try 30 minutes as hot as can be tolerated (unless you have diabetes or arterial disease in the legs, in which case you may place a heating pad on the lower abdomen and upper thighs to reflexively increase the circulation to the legs and feet). Repeat as often as every four hours. Finish the treatment with a cold water pour from a pitcher or a brief cold shower.

Sweating eliminates many salts, drugs, toxins, and even viruses. Be certain to take enough water when sweating. The sweating can be done while sitting in a bathtub with hot water. Keep your head cool, or you may feel weak and dizzy afterwards.

An earache can be treated by dropping ice water in the ear by simply holding an ice cube over the ear and letting the ice water drip into the ear canal until the canal is filled with the cold water. Then turn on the side to drain the water out. Pain relief will often be dramatic, and the patient may go to sleep and wake up free from the earache. The next day after such a treatment, the ear canal should be filled with ordinary rubbing alcohol, and then drained in the same way, the little finger used with a tissue to dry as much of the alcohol as can be reached with the finger. Do not insert anything in the ear smaller than the little finger. The alcohol will dry the ear canal and prevent a fungus infection.

Two showers daily are recommended to cleanse skin, increase the circulation, and stimulate white blood cells. Friction the skin with a coarse washcloth during the shower.

Many very powerful responses occur in the body when using hot and alternating cold applications, such as dilating blood vessels followed by constriction of blood vessels. This gives a pumping effect which brings fresh blood laden with healing proteins. The extra blood also carries away wastes and toxins.

Chest congestion sometimes associated with the flu can be treated with fomentations over the chest, or hot foot baths. Each of these treatments should be carried on for half an hour, and followed by half an hour of bed rest. Prevent chilling and fatigue but remember to have a good supply of fresh air in the room at all times.

Back rubs and full body massage may be used for muscle aches and pains during influenza. Several healing properties are brought by the massage - a favorable change of the cellular pH, a relaxation of tight or painful muscles, a quickening of the circulation of both blood and lymph, elimination of wastes, and many other benefits.

Eat simple foods; avoid concentrated foods such as oils, sugars, and heavy proteins. These all tend to reduce the activity of white blood cells. Just two to three simple dishes, with bread, and without sugar or free fats, will give adequate nutrition.

Of course, alcoholic beverages, smoking, and coffee and its relatives, should all be avoided. Antibiotics and corticosteroids should not be used as they are not effective, and may be quite harmful. Some natural antibiotics such as goldenseal, echinacea, grapefruit seed extract, and garlic are advisable.

Recipe for Immune Builder Soup

Dice one large onion, and boil it in three quarts of water until clear. Add one quart of canned tomatoes and any of the following seasonings: dulse, parsley, dill, and Vegesal. Take off the fire and press one or more bulbs of garlic into the soup or put a portion of the soup in the blender with the peeled cloves of one entire bulb of garlic. Blenderize briefly and return the entire contents of the blender back to the hot soup to continue heating but do not boil. The heating will make it so the stomach can tolerate the quantity of the soup needed for building the immune system. If this soup is taken for supper it will prevent coughing at night. Do not reheat. Take the remainder cold at mealtimes.

Fasting - This old fashioned remedy is found not only in humans, but also in other animals. Take in nothing but water or herb teas and this will allow the body to use the energy usually used in operating the digestive organs for the healing process. A fast of one to three days can make you feel like a new person - senses sharper, head clearer, body lighter, and more energetic.

Note: Diligence pays. Continue the treatments, fighting the infection vigorously to try to keep from being overcome by the virus. All virus infections leave the body temporarily weakened and more susceptible to other diseases, possibly even diseases such as Parkinson's, diabetes, and orchitis. Even if you are overcome by the virus, diligent treatment is still in order, not only to avoid complications, but also to shorten the course of the illness.

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