

Influenza is on the rise!!

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Influenza is on the rise again. Please note the following information.

■ Daily precautions (to prevent being infected)

- Wash hands (alcohol gels are effective) and gargle regularly.
 - ie. Pabron hand gel 365 [パブロンハンドジェル 365]
 - Medicinal hand gel A [薬用ハンドジェル A]



- Maintain a healthy diet (fruits are an excellent source of vitamin C).
- Exercise to strengthen your body's immune system.
- Keep regular hours of sleep (Staying up late, or all night, should be avoided).
- Avoid crowds.
- Avoid dry air (Humidifiers are a good idea).

■ After contracting influenza (to discourage its spread)

- Stay away from school/club activities/part-time jobs, so as not to infect others.
- Get plenty of rest and drink plenty of fluids (sports drinks, fruits, etc.).
- Stay in a separate room from roommates and arrange to have meals brought to you (sharing a room encourages infection).
- Influenza testing is available at the Kyoto Univ. Infirmary and other similar institutions (around 1,200 yen).
- Tamiflu is the name of the medication used to treat Influenza, however there are concerns over its high price (around 3,200 yen), effectiveness (resistant



strains), and adverse side effects (gastrointestinal disorders, unusual behavior).

- Antipyretics (non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs like Voltaren and Pontal) are possibly connected to encephalopathy, and should therefore not be taken.
- Stay at home for at least 2 days after the fever has gone down (as stipulated in the School Health Law).

■ Useful Information

- The influenza virus is spread through splash droplets and contact with contaminated surfaces. Viruses fly no more than 90 cm when projected from coughs and sneezes, however touching surfaces where they have landed, and then touching the face results in infection.
- Masks do not block the passing of virus particles; however they are effective against splash, and are effective when the person infected with the cold or influenza wears it. Masks and goggles are also thought to be helpful in blocking droplets in crowded areas.
- Tamiflu works by preventing the replication of the virus. It does not have the ability to destroy them. Clinical studies worldwide have indicated that Tamiflu taken within 24 hours results in a recovery that is 1.5 days quicker, and 1 day quicker if taken 1~1.5 days after onset. Note however, results vary from person to person. Also, Tamiflu is ineffective taken more than 2 days after onset.
- This season has seen an increase in influenza strains that are Tamiflu resistant. According to the National Institute of Infectious Diseases, 1/3 of the Soviet-A strain cases of the 2008~2009 season in Japan have shown to be 98% resistant to Tamiflu (up from 2.6% last season). The medication is believed to be effective against the Hong Kong-A strain, although the two strains are indistinguishable through the standard tests.
- On the other hand, the influenza vaccine for this season is found to be effective against these Tamiflu resistant viruses, and inoculation is recommended.



■ References

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/news/20090117p2a00m0na008000c.html>