



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DA
tuesday 20220215

International Childhood Cancer Day 2022

International Childhood Cancer Day 2022: Ways to take care of a child's mental health during treatment (The Indian Express:20220215)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/international-childhood-cancer-day-2022-children-mental-health-treatment-7769589/>

"For a few months, the child needs to come to the hospital frequently, and many times, they also require admission, chemotherapy treatments and injections. So, a child's life is turned upside down during the treatment," Dr Gauri Kapoor said

Childhood Cancer, mental healthExpert weighs in the importance of taking care of children's mental health. (Source: File Photo)

Every year, on February 15, International Childhood Cancer Day is observed to raise awareness about childhood cancer and to express support for children and adolescents with cancer, the survivors and their families. While there's growing awareness about cancer in children, its effect on their mental health is still a matter of acute concern.

According to Dr Gauri Kapoor, Medical Director Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCIRC), Nitibagh and Director, Pediatric Hematology and Oncology at RGCIRC Rohini, "Childhood cancer is curable. However, the treatment is quite intensive. For a few months, the child needs to come to the hospital frequently, and many times, they also require admission, chemotherapy treatments and injections. So, a child's life is turned upside down during the treatment."

"Also, he/she can't understand what's happening. It's difficult to explain because many times, the children are so young that we can't properly make them understand the scientific basis of what we are doing. Thus, it is a very stressful time," Dr Kapoor said, highlighting the mental health impact of cancer on children.

ALSO READ |Childhood cancer in India: From symptoms to role of nutrition, all you need to know

She added: "At the same time, there's a fear about cancer in the country, making their family and relatives very anxious. Their lives become difficult, too — emotionally, physically and socially. So, a child is not just experiencing physical problems but also seeing everyone around

him/her stressed. Thus, it's important to understand that a child will have emotional and psychological problems during the treatment.”

Ways to take care of children's mental health

We try to anticipate and address this problem to minimise its impact on them, the pediatric oncologist highlighted.

*We try our best to have a rapport with the child. We try to explain in simple words what we are going to do and what it means.

*We try to make the treatment as less painful as possible for the child.

*We try to keep the environment and ambience child-friendly, like having games and activities.

*We have a pediatric counsellor to counsel the children and parents as the child has to be seen in his/her relation with the family.

ALSO READ |World Cancer Day: Oncologists share essential health tips to prevent cancer
What parents can do?

According to Dr Kapoor, parents need to remain calm and maintain a stress-free environment for their child. She suggested the following tips for parents.

*It is crucial to reduce stress and anxiety in parents. They need to accept that they also need psychological help.

*If parents are relaxed, the child will be relaxed too.

*Parents need to deal with the child in a normal way and not give them extra privileges and leeways.

*In consultation with their cancer specialist, they can continue some homebound education work.

Menopause

Five mudras that will help you manage symptoms of menopause (The Indian Express:20220215)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/mudras-manage-symptoms-menopause-yoga-poses-asanas-health-women-7760543/>

Yoga offers a "holistic solution" and helps you to "not only manage the symptoms with ease, but also provides you with a support system through this period of transition".

menopause, menopause symptoms, dealing with menopause, yoga mudras for menopause, yoga asanas for menopause, health, indian express news Along with asanas, pranayama and meditation, mudras can also help you through this natural process of menopause. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

Menopause indicates the cessation of the menstrual cycle and a natural decline in the reproductive hormones of women, when they are in their late 40s and early 50s. Usually, menopause is said to have happened when there is a period of 12 months since last the menstrual cycle.

In the period leading up to it, women experience certain symptoms like hot flashes and vaginal dryness, and in some cases, there could also be sleep disturbances. The combination of these symptoms can cause anxiety or depression in some.

ALSO READ | ‘And Just Like That...’ dealt with a symptom of perimenopause; find out more about it

According to Grand Master Akshar, a philanthropist, spiritual master, lifestyle coach, yoga-preneur and author, yoga offers a “holistic solution” and helps you to “not only manage the symptoms with ease, but also provides you with a support system through this period of transition”.

“Along with asanas, pranayama and meditation, mudras can also help you through this natural process of menopause. Hold each mudra for at least 5 minutes setting aside 25 minutes for the whole practice,” he says.

Covid News Live

Covid News Live: Registering sharp dip, India records 27,409 new Covid-19 cases (The Indian Express:20220215)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/covid-news-live-omicron-delhi-vaccine-mumbai-schools-colleges-reopen-7774366/>

Covid-19 Active Cases India Feb 15 Latest Updates, Omicron Cases in India, Coronavirus NeoCov New Strain, Coronavirus Latest Guidelines, Covid-19 Vaccine Dose Status, Omicron Corona Today LIVE Updates: The cumulative Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country surpassed 173.42 crore on Tuesday.

By: Express Web Desk | Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi, Pune |

Updated: February 15, 2022 11:09:48 am

COVID-19 Omicron Live News, omicron variant Coronavirus india Students undergo thermal screening before entering as schools reopened after relaxation in Covid induced restrictions, in Mathura. (PTI)

Coronavirus Omicron India LIVE News: India recorded 27,409 new Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours, registering a sharp dip from Monday's 34,113 infections. India's active case load now stands at 4,23,127, comprising 0.99 per cent of the total cases. In the same period, 347 fatalities have been reported, taking the Covid-19 death toll to 5,09,358. The daily Covid-19 cases have remained below 1 lakh for nine consecutive days now. The daily and weekly positivity rates stand at 2.23 per cent and 3.63 per cent respectively.

Around 95 per cent of swab samples examined in the latest round of genome sequencing in Mumbai were found infected with the Omicron variant that triggered the third wave of the coronavirus pandemic in late December and which has now ebbed in the metropolis, the city civic body said.

DELHI NEWS

1 Indian hair being smuggled to China, claims ED, raids multiple locations

2 Delhi Govt withdraws cancellation of leave order as Covid-19 cases decline

3 East MCD's proposal to change land use on Yamuna floodplains for solid waste processing plant rejected

More from Delhi

Meanwhile, in Delhi, Jamia Millia Islamia announced that physical classes for final-year postgraduate students will resume from March 2 and for final-year undergraduate students from mid-March. The university has mandated a negative RTPCR report along with a valid ID card for those coming for offline classes. The decision came a day after schools resumed for students of all classes as Delhi saw a dip in Covid-19 cases.

LIVE BLOG

Covid News Live: The daily Covid-19 cases have remained below 1 lakh for nine consecutive days now while the recovery rate further improved to 97.82 per cent; Follow this space for Latest updates

Active Covid cases

Active Covid cases in country decline to 4,23,127 347 more deaths reported (The Tribune: 20220215)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/active-covid-cases-in-country-decline-to-4-23-127-370087>

Active Covid cases in country decline to 4,23,127

Photo for representation purposes. Tribune

New Covid cases in India were recorded below 30,000 after 44 days, taking the virus tally to 4,26,92,943, while the active cases dipped to 4,23,127, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday.

The death toll climbed to 5,09,358 with 347 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The daily Covid cases have been recorded less than one lakh for nine consecutive days. The active cases comprised 0.99 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid recovery rate had improved to 97.82 per cent, the ministry said.

A reduction of 55,755 cases has been recorded in the active Covid caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The 347 new fatalities include 178 from Kerala and 25 from Karnataka.

A total of 5,09,358 deaths have been reported so far in the country, including 1,43,416 from Maharashtra, 62,377 from Kerala, 39,665 from Karnataka, 37,932 from Tamil Nadu, 26,076 from Delhi, 23,399 from Uttar Pradesh and 21,040 from West Bengal.

Omicron variant

Omicron found in 95 per cent of samples in Mumbai in latest genome sequencing

The omicron variant had triggered the third wave of the coronavirus pandemic in late December 2021 and it now ebbs in the Maharashtra state capital (The Tribune: 20220215)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/omicron-found-in-95-per-cent-of-samples-in-mumbai-in-latest-genome-sequencing-370085>

Nearly 95 per cent of swab samples examined in the latest round of genome sequencing in Mumbai were found infected with the omicron variant of Covid, the city civic body has said.

The omicron variant had triggered the third wave of the coronavirus pandemic in late December 2021 and it now ebbed in the Maharashtra state capital.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) in a release issued on Monday appealed to citizens to continue following Covid-appropriate behaviour despite a huge drop in daily cases.

Covid: DCGI panel clears Corbevax for 12-18 age group

Covid: DCGI panel clears Corbevax for 12-18 age group(The Tribune: 20220215)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/covid-dcgi-panel-clears-corbevax-for-12-18-age-group-369911>

The subject experts committee of the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has recommended granting emergency use authorisation to Biological E's Covid vaccine for 12 to 18-year-olds.

The DCGI had on December 28 last year approved Corbevax, which is India's first indigenous RBD protein sub-unit vaccine, for restricted use in emergency situation in adults. It has not been included in the country's vaccination drive yet. The government is yet to take a decision on vaccinating those aged below 15 years.

India, s Daily Covid Count (The Asian Age:20220215)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=16167793>

India's daily Covid count down to 34K; 586 in Delhi

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 14

India on Monday reported 34,113 fresh Covid-19 infections, taking its tally to 4,26,65,534, while active cases dropped below five lakhs after 37 days. The daily Covid-19 count has remained below one lakh for eight days running. With 346 new fatalities, the death toll went up to 5,09,011.

The number of active cases, which have fallen to 4,78,882, comprise 1.12 per cent of total infections.

The national Covid-19 recovery rate has gone up to 97.68 per cent. There was a reduction of 58,163 cases in the active Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

Delhi reported 586 fresh Covid-19 cases and four fatalities. The positivity rate marginally declined to 1.37 per cent in last 24 hours. With this, the city's caseload rose to 18,51,906, and the death toll climbed to 26,076.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide Covid-19 vaccination drive have exceeded 172.95 crore.

■ **Panel recommends EUA for Corbevax for 12-18 years age group: Page 4**

Mental health

In a first, IPCC to list impact of climate crisis on mental health (The Hindustan Times:20220215)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>

According to the United Nations weather agency, the growing trend of disasters is expected to continue at least till the 2060s. AFP

Jayashree Nandi

letters@hindustantimes.com

New Delhi : Climate scientists and national representatives gathered on Monday for a virtual two-week conference to finalise the latest section of the sixth report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which is, for the first time, expected to also inform on the mental health impacts of the climate crisis.

“A part of the mental health challenge is apocalyptic fears among young generations. So, we have to be careful how we communicate the results of our science and whether we talk of collapsing of the biosphere and disappearance of mankind,” Petteri Taalas, secretary general of the World Meteorological Organization, said during the opening ceremony of 55th session of the United Nations (UN)-backed body that collates latest scientific opinion on global warming

The report, which will have a summary for policymakers that the conference will review line by line, will cover economic, food security, biosphere, health and mental health impacts of the climate crisis. The summary will be published on February 28.

The IPCC in August last year released a comprehensive report on the physical science basis of climate change that influenced the Glasgow climate summit in November. The physics community was clear on what is happening so far and expected to happen in the coming decades, especially on the melting of glaciers and rise in sea levels, Taalas said.

“The growing trend of disasters is expected to continue at least till the 2060s, and sea level rise will continue much longer because we have already exceeded 420 ppm of CO2 concentrations,” said the chief of the UN weather agency. “If we have carbon removal technologies available, we could change that. So far that is not the case.”

In 1980, the concentration of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere was around 340 parts per million (ppm), according to the World Meteorological Organisation.

Impacts of climate crisis are visible and clearly understood by heads of states, and they did not question the scientific information at the Glasgow conference, Taalas pointed out. “Africa, South Asia and Pacific Islands are very vulnerable when it comes to impacts of climate change,” he said.

The current sixth cycle of the assessment report is the most ambitious one in IPCC's history, said Hoesung Lee, chair of the scientific body. Compared to its previous reports, the latest one will have more general and local information with focus on natural, social and economic sciences, Lee said.

In the next two weeks, policymakers from 196 countries and 270 scientists from 67 nations will scrutinise the summary for policymakers.

“The first working group report of the IPCC sixth assessment in 2021 quantified the physical changes in the past and future climate, due to increased greenhouse gas emissions. The second working group report will elaborate on the impacts and risks due to these physical changes and point out ways to reduce these risks through adaptation,” Roxy Mathew Koll, climate scientist at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, said last week.

“South Asia, and particularly India, is already facing increased risks due to rising extreme weather events such as floods, landslides, and droughts, cyclones, heatwaves and cold waves, and a rising sea level. The dense population and low household income in the region will raise the vulnerability and risk that we are facing,” Koll had said. “Hence, we urgently need to embrace adaptive measures to build a climate-resilient, disaster-proof country, but that will require immediate policy and action.”

Corbevax Vaccine

Corbevax Vaccine : कोबिंवेक्स की पहली खेप सौंपी जाएगी, जानिए टीके के बारे में सब कुछ (Amar Ujala:20220215)

<https://www.amarujala.com/india-news/first-batch-of-corbevax-will-be-handed-over-know-everything-about-the-vaccine?src=tlh&position=12>

न्यूज डेस्क, अमर उजाला, नई दिल्ली Published by: सुरेंद्र जोशी Updated Tue, 15 Feb 2022 08:16 AM IST सार

बायोलॉजिकल ई अपने टीके कोबिंवेक्स की 25 करोड़ खुराक का उत्पादन कर चुकी है। वह कुछ सप्ताहों में बचे डोज भी तैयार कर लेगी। बायोलॉजिकल ई द्वारा विकसित कोबिंवेक्स

बायोलॉजिकल ई द्वारा विकसित कोबिंवेक्स - फोटो : amar ujala विस्तार

केंद्र सरकार को कोबिंवेक्स टीके की पहली खेप आज मिल जाएगी। इसके साथ ही अब 12 से 18 साल के बच्चों के लिए नया टीका मिल जाएगा। अभी 15 से 18 साल तक के बच्चों को कोवाक्सिन की खुराक दी जा रही है।

बायोलॉजिकल ई द्वारा 12 से 18 साल तक के बच्चों के लिए विकसित इस कोरोना वैक्सीन की 30 करोड़ खुराक सरकार खरीद रही है। इनकी खरीदी का आर्डर अगस्त 2021 में दिया गया था। बायोलॉजिकल ई अपने टीके कोबिंवेक्स की 25 करोड़ खुराक का उत्पादन कर चुकी है। वह कुछ सप्ताहों में बचे डोज भी तैयार कर लेगी।

हैदराबाद की कंपनी बायोलॉजिकल ई को इन टीकों की खरीदी के लिए सरकार ने पिछले साल 1500 करोड़ का अग्रिम भुगतान किया था। एक दिन पहले ही भारतीय दवा नियंत्रक (DGCI) ने 12 से 18 साल तक के बच्चों के लिए कोर्बि वैक्स टीके के आपात इस्तेमाल की इजाजत दी है। उम्मीद है कि DGCI इसे अंतिम मंजूरी भी जल्द दे देगा। आधिकारिक सूत्रों ने सोमवार को एएनआई को बताया कि कोर्बि वैक्स का मूल्य संभवतः 145 रुपये रहेगा। इसमें कर शामिल नहीं है।

पिछले साल दिसंबर में डीजीसीआई ने वयस्कों के लिए कोर्बि वैक्स के सीमित आपात इस्तेमाल की इजाजत दी थी, लेकिन इस टीके को अभी मौजूदा टीकाकरण अभियान में शामिल नहीं किया गया है। टीके की खेप मिलने के बाद 12 से 18 साल तक के बच्चों को यह वैक्सीन लगाने का फैसला कर सकती है।

आरबीडी प्रोटीन आधारित वैक्सीन

केंद्रीय स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय के अनुसार यह वैक्सीन भारत की पहली आरबीडी प्रोटीन आधारित कोविड-19 वैक्सीन है। यह भारत बायोटेक की कोवाक्सिन के बाद दूसरी वैक्सीन है, जिसे 18 साल से कम उम्र के बच्चों के लिए लगाया जाएगा।

क्या है कोर्बि वैक्स टीके की खासियत?

कोर्बि वैक्स टीका इंट्रामस्क्युलर यानी मांसपेशियों के जरिए लगाया जाता है। इसकी दो खुराक 28 दिनों के अंतराल पर दी जाती है। कोर्बि वैक्स 0.5 मिलीलीटर (एकल खुराक) और 5 मिलीलीटर (दस खुराक) की शीशी में उपलब्ध है। इसे 2 से 8 डिग्री सेल्सियस पर संरक्षित किया जाता है।

रहें हर खबर से अपडेट, डाउनलोड करें Android Hindi News apps, iOS Hindi News apps और Amarujala Hindi News apps अपने मोबाइल पे।

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Three doses of COVID vaccine (New Kerala:20220215)

Three doses of COVID vaccine better than two? Study suggests so! The majority of the vaccines available for COVID-19 have two doses. People are said to become more capable of resisting the virus after the second dose. But, a -> View it--> <https://www.newkerala.com/news/2022/24494.htm>

epilepsy

'Empathy towards people with epilepsy crucial to overcome problem' (New Kerala:20220215)

People with epilepsy can lead a normal life, but it is the attitude of the society towards them that impacts the quality of their life, according to doctors.--> View it--> <https://www.newkerala.com/news/2022/24190.htm>

Pregnancy

Pregnant women faced more anxiety during COVID-19 pandemic: Research (New Kerala:20220215)

13: University of Essex's new study has found that the COVID-19 pandemic caused a spike in depression and anxiety in expectant mothers.->-> View it--> <https://www.newkerala.com/news/2022/24132.htm>

Hypertension

Sleep apnea in pregnancy linked with increased post-delivery risk of hypertension: Study (New Kerala:20220215)

Sleep apnea is a potentially serious sleep disorder in which breathing repeatedly stops and starts. A new study by researchers examine-> View it--> <https://www.newkerala.com/news/2022/24084.htm>

Immune response

How Covid variants escape cellular immune response (New Kerala:20220215)

A team of Spanish researchers have identified a number of existing strains of SARS-CoV-2, as well as future variants, which have the potential to escape the immune system's cytotoxic -> View it--> <https://www.newkerala.com/news/2022/24045.htm>

Omicron infection

Omicron infection: What are the symptoms? (Medical News Today:20220215)

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/omicron-infection-what-are-the-symptoms#Tips-for-prevention>

As infections of the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2 — the virus that causes COVID-19 — continue to spread around the world, there have been reports that symptoms, in some respects, are different from those of Delta variant infections. Do symptoms really differ? What should you look out for?

What do we know about the symptoms of an infection with the Omicron variant? Image credit: Pierre Crom/Getty Images.

All data and statistics are based on publicly available data at the time of publication. Some information may be out of date. Visit our coronavirus hub and follow our live updates page for the most recent information on the COVID-19 pandemic.

On November 26, 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) indicated a new SARS-CoV-2 variant of concern, which became known as Omicron Trusted Source.

The variant has caused concern among health authorities because it appears to be highly transmissible Trusted Source and likelier to reinfect.

There have also been some worries that Omicron can bypass the protection conferred by COVID-19 vaccines. Pfizer maintains that three doses of its mRNA vaccine are able to neutralize Omicron in laboratory experiments and that two doses may still prevent serious illness following infection with this variant.

Stay informed with live updates on the current COVID-19 outbreak and visit our coronavirus hub for more advice on prevention and treatment.

For these reasons, countries worldwide have been taking various measures and precautions to reduce the spread of Omicron among their populations.

Nevertheless, within a world in constant motion, it may be impossible to stop it from spreading altogether. Some cause for optimism may be that various reports suggest that infections with this variant tend to cause milder symptoms than those with previous SARS-CoV-2 variants, such as Delta.

But how can someone tell if they have the Omicron infection? Are the symptoms the same as those of infections with previous variants?

What symptoms does Omicron cause?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists the possible symptoms Trusted Source of a SARS-CoV-2 infection without specifying a variant. These are:

- fever or chills
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fatigue
- muscle or body aches
- headache

new loss of taste or smell
sore throat
congestion or runny nose
nausea or vomiting
diarrhea

However, the CDC notes this list is not exhaustive, and people might experience different symptoms or combinations of symptoms. Furthermore, anecdotal reports on social media and other platforms claim that more specific combinations of symptoms characterize Omicron infections.

The Zoe COVID Study — conducted by researchers from health science company ZOE and King's College London in the United Kingdom — uses data from over 4,000,000 participants.

The study's recent analysis aimed to determine whether there were any differences between the most common symptoms of infection with the Delta variant and the most common symptoms of infection with Omicron.

They compared symptoms reported via the Zoe COVID Study app by U.K. participants who tested positive for COVID-19 in October 2021, when Delta was dominant in the U.K., with those who tested positive in December 2021 when Omicron had become the dominant variant.

Preliminary analysis indicated that the most commonly reported symptoms reported in both months were largely the same: a runny nose, headache, fatigue, sneezing, and a sore throat.

The findings suggest no strong differences in the most commonly experienced symptoms likely caused by the two SARS-CoV-2 variants.

However, according to this self-reported data, the ZOE scientists also note that loss of smell and taste appear to be less common among people recently testing positive for COVID-19.

Does it affect the lungs?

Medical News Today spoke to Dr. David M. Cutler, family physician at Saint John's Physician Partners in Santa Monica, CA, to find out more about doctors' advice regarding symptoms of an Omicron infection.

Dr. Cutler reiterated that symptoms vary and may not stand out in any particular way, compared to signs of infection with previous variants.

“The variety of symptoms seen with Omicron is the same as with other SARS-CoV-2 variants,” he said. “It seems quite notable that people affected by the same variant may experience quite different symptoms. Some get nasal stuffiness, others headache, sometimes body aches, and others get a sore throat.”

However, he noted, “[s]erious lung infections appear to be less likely with Omicron than [with] prior variants.”

That may be because, unlike other variants, Omicron preferentially infects the upper respiratory tract. This may also be why it seems to cause milder symptoms, according to WHO Incident Manager Abdi Mahamud.

“We are seeing more and more studies pointing out that Omicron is infecting the upper part of the body. Unlike the other ones, that could cause severe pneumonia,” he says, though cautions that more studies are necessary to confirm this.

CORONAVIRUS NEWS

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How can you detect Omicron infections?

There have also been some anecdotal reports that lateral flow tests — also known as LFTs — may be less effective at detecting the presence of an Omicron infection.

Such tests, which people can do at home, are based on samples taken from a person’s nose, throat, or both and are meant to detect certain viral antigens^{Trusted Source}, which indicate the presence of a viral infection.

According to Dr. Cutler, “[l]ateral flow tests are inherently inaccurate [because] [t]hey do not detect low levels of virus as well as PCR tests.”

RT-PCR tests, or PCR for short, are based on samples taken from both a person’s nose and throat. These samples, however, undergo laboratory testing, which can reveal whether SARS-CoV-2 specific genes are present. PCR tests are more sensitive and generally held as being more accurate.

Testing for genetic markers can also reveal, more specifically, the SARS-CoV-2 variant.

Some health agencies, such as the U.K. Health Security Agency (UKHSA), have nevertheless declared that, when used correctly, LFTs should detect infections with any SARS-CoV-2 variant in most cases.

A laboratory evaluation of lateral flow devices currently in use in the U.K by the UKHSA also suggests that LFTs detect Omicron as effectively as previous variants.

How can you treat a mild Omicron infection?

What happens if you become infected with the Omicron variant, and symptoms are mild enough not to require hospitalized care? How can you treat a mild infection at home?

“There are no specific home non-prescription drug remedies for preventing or treating [COVID-19],” Dr. Cutler noted.

The best remedies are similar to those you might use to treat mild flu symptoms or a cold:

“Recommended treatment is directed at the symptoms: stay hydrated, rested, and well-nourished. Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen to relieve headache, body aches, or fever. Avoid unproven remedies like hydroxychloroquine, ivermectin, zinc, and vitamin D, which have no known value and can cause adverse effects.”

– Dr. David M. Cutler

Tips for prevention

As they say, though, prevention is better than cure, so taking measures to protect ourselves and our loved ones from becoming infected with Omicron or any other SARS-CoV-2 variant is the best approach.

“The best method to prevent infection with any SARS-CoV-2 variant is a multiple technique approach,” explained Dr. Cutler. “I like to call this a ‘Swiss cheese’ approach.”

“[J]ust like you need multiple layers of Swiss cheese so that you can’t see any ham through the cheese holes in a sandwich, you need multiple types of protection to prevent [COVID-19]. No one protective technique is 100% effective. Vaccines, masks, distancing, ventilation, and avoiding ill or unvaccinated people are all important and effective to prevent you from getting [an] infection. And isolating when you are infected is critical in preventing you from spreading [the virus] to others.”

Breastfeeding

Why are vitamin D and other supplements necessary when breastfeeding? (Medical News Today:20220215)

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/why-are-vitamin-d-and-other-supplements-necessary-when-breastfeeding#Vitamin-D>

Dietary recommendations during breastfeeding are complex because they affect both the person and their baby. Due to a lack of consensus about dietary insufficiency and the effects of supplements on breast milk, guidelines for breastfeeding have been slower to evolve than those for pregnancy.

It is often unclear why doctors recommend certain dietary supplements during breastfeeding. Image credit: Vradiy Art/Stocksy.

The recent furore over a National Health Service (NHS) claim that weight loss is a benefit of breastfeeding served to highlight how focused on calories nutritional advice can be.

The wording on the NHS’ Start4Life website has since changed, but there has been no additional advice about nutritional requirements. So, just what do lactating people need?

The question is not as straightforward as it seems. First, research into breastfeeding is largely focused on the needs of the baby, and little research had explored the composition of breast milk until fairly recently.

A 2020 study described past research as “scant” and reported that it focused mainly on the first few weeks of lactation.

A lack of understanding about the composition of breast milk makes it difficult to understand exactly which nutrients lactating uses up and exactly what a baby receives.

While researchers are using new techniques to gather insights into the composition of breast milk, these points remain unclear for many.

Vitamin D

Recent news that vitamin D could offer protection against autoimmune diseases is to be welcomed. It adds clarity to an issue that has confounded researchers for decades, and it adds weight to calls for routine vitamin D supplementation for everyone in Northern latitudes.

Vitamin D is created when sunlight hits the skin, but short days, cool climates, and spending most of the time indoors means that as many as 40% of Europeans have a deficiency, which may be severe in 13% of cases.

Dr. Gareth Nye, a lecturer in physiology at the University of Chester, explained to Medical News Today:

“Most of us are deficient between October and April, at best, and many of us will have low levels throughout the year, which is why the recommendation that all pregnant women should take a supplement of 10 [micrograms (mcg)] or 400 [international units (IU)] of vitamin D per day throughout pregnancy is sensible and cost effective.”

“Low levels of vitamin D leave children prone to a condition called rickets, where the bones do not develop correctly,” he explained, adding that “Most formula milks have vitamin D supplementation included. However, with breastfeeding, all the source has to come from the mother.”

There is some evidence that people who breastfeed are more likely to have a vitamin D deficiency than the rest of the population.

A subanalysis of a German study into vitamin levels found that breastfeeding women were more likely to have vitamin D deficiencies than other women, and that these deficiencies likely arose during pregnancy. This means that the levels of vitamin D in their breast milk are also likely to be low, putting their babies at risk of deficiencies.

Considering that vitamin D supplementation is advisable during pregnancy and at other times of life, one could be forgiven for thinking that supplementation during breastfeeding would not be particularly controversial. One would, however, be wrong.

While the American Association of Pediatrics suggested that all children receive supplements of 200 IU of vitamin D a day in 2003 and raised this to 400 IU a day in 2008, uptake has been low.

One reason is that some breastfeeding advocates have argued that supplementing breastfed babies undermines breastfeeding.

The implication that breast milk does not provide sufficient nutrition for babies has been documented by UNICEF as a technique used by companies to push breast milk substitutes inappropriately. This is at the root of the controversy.

Meanwhile, low participation in childhood supplementation has led to the question of whether maternal supplementation could fill the gap. Various studies have shown that maternal supplementation does increase the vitamin D levels in breast milk high enough to prevent deficiencies in children.

However, questions remain about whether 400 IU a day is enough. Both of those studies included dosages of at least 6,000 IU (150 mcg) a day.

For breastfed babies, guidelines still recommend vitamin D supplementation for the first 6 months of life, at which point the introduction of solid food should introduce other sources of vitamin D. Breastfeeding people should continue to take vitamin D supplements according to existing guidelines.

Dr. Nye said: “Once the child is eating other forms of food, like yogurts, cow’s milk and eggs, they are getting the vitamin D themselves. So supplementation is only advised for as long as breastfeeding is the sole source of food.”

Antibiotics

Two antibiotics may have an antiviral effect against COVID-19(Medical News Today:20220215)

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/two-antibiotics-may-have-an-antiviral-effect-against-covid-19>

New research explores a novel COVID-19 treatment combination involving antibiotics. nevodka/Getty Images

A small study suggests that treating patients who have moderate or severe COVID-19 with ceftazidime or cefepime, plus the steroid dexamethasone, is as effective as standard care.

The antibiotic-plus-steroid treatment was associated with fewer side effects compared with standard care, which can involve seven or more different drugs.

Lab tests and computer simulations found that both antibiotics inhibit a key enzyme used by SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

However, there is currently no evidence from clinical trials that antibiotics are effective against the virus, and experts warn that overuse promotes antibiotic resistance.

Healthcare professionals are always keen to stress that antibiotics are ineffective against viral infections, with some rare exceptions.

Antibiotics have saved the lives of millions of people since they came into widespread use early in the 20th century, but overuse accelerates the evolution of bacterial resistance to the drugs.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Trusted Source, there are more than 2.8 million cases of antibiotic-resistant infection and 35,000 resulting deaths annually in the United States alone.

Stay informed with live updates on the current COVID-19 outbreak and visit our coronavirus hub for more advice on prevention and treatment.

Therefore, there are serious concerns that overprescribing antibiotics to patients with COVID-19 — in the absence of any evidence of a bacterial coinfection — promotes the spread of antibiotic resistance.

In the United Kingdom, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence reports that under 8% of people hospitalized with COVID-19 also have a bacterial infection.

But one study Trusted Source in the U.K. found that around 85% of COVID-19 patients receive treatment with an antibiotic during their hospital stay.

During the pandemic, there had been early hopes that the antibiotic azithromycin might be an effective treatment for COVID-19. However, a recent Cochrane review of clinical trials found no evidence for this.

So the findings of a small study that suggests either of two antibiotics, in combination with the steroid dexamethasone, may be an effective treatment for the disease are controversial.

Faster recovery time?

The study involved 370 patients with moderate or severe COVID-19 who were admitted to Beni-Suef University Hospital in Beni Suef, Egypt.

Researchers randomly assigned the patients to three groups:

treatment with cefepime plus dexamethasone: 124 patients

treatment with ceftazidime plus dexamethasone: 136 patients

standard COVID-19 treatment, as recommended in World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines and the Egyptian management protocol, with seven or more drugs: 110 patients

The mean recovery time for patients receiving treatment with cefepime or ceftazidime was 12 days and 13 days, respectively, while the mean recovery time with standard treatment was 19 days.

The researchers emphasize that the study was not a clinical trial and that there were insufficient numbers of patients in each group to draw firm conclusions.

However, they also conducted lab tests and computer simulations, which suggested that these two antibiotics inhibit the activity of a protease enzyme called Mpro Trusted Source. Mpro is an important part of a virus's life cycle — a reduced activity of the enzyme impairs the replication rate of the virus.

The study appears in the journal Antibiotics.

Alzheimer's:

Alzheimer's: Addressing sleep disturbance may alleviate symptoms(Medical News Today:20220215)

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/alzheimers-addressing-sleep-disturbance-may-alleviate-symptoms#Protein-buildup>

Addressing sleep disturbance may help reduce symptoms of Alzheimer's. Milamai/Getty Images

People with Alzheimer's disease often experience sleep disturbances, or circadian disruption. This disruption may increase the severity of Alzheimer's disease.

A new study suggests that circadian rhythms control the buildup of a key protein in the brain of people with Alzheimer's.

The researchers propose that controlling circadian rhythms in people with Alzheimer's may help alleviate symptoms.

Dementia is one of the leading causes of death Trusted Source worldwide. The most common form, Alzheimer's disease (AD), affects 1 in 9 people aged 65 and over in the United States and 1 in 14 in this age group in the United Kingdom.

A feature of AD is a disruption in circadian rhythms Trusted Source, the daily physical, mental, and behavioral changes that control our sleep and wakefulness.

Indeed, people can experience sleep disturbances, which are associated with more severe symptoms, years before receiving an AD diagnosis.

Now, researchers from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York may have discovered a link between these circadian disruptions and the development of AD.

They carried out their research, which appears in PLOS Genetics, in a laboratory, using cells derived from mouse white blood cells. The researchers identified a molecular mechanism that may be responsible for the connection between AD and circadian rhythms.

Protein buildup

Alzheimer's is a neuroinflammatory Trusted Source disease characterized by the buildup of beta-amyloid Trusted Source. The most damaging of these is beta-amyloid 42 (A β 42) Trusted Source. The proteins form plaques that collect between neurons and disrupt cell function.

Scientists believe the growth of amyloid plaques is a crucial step in the development of AD.

Immune cells called microglia play a role in clearing amyloid plaques. This process, called phagocytosis, is essential for maintaining healthy neurons.

Using mouse cells, the researchers found that phagocytosis changes throughout the day and night. When phagocytosis is interrupted, for example, by sleep disruption, A β 42 builds up.