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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
4841	27.08.2018	27.08.2018	Chennai Tamil Nadu	www.thehindu.com/English https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/rains-trigger-outbreak-of-viral-infection-in-children/article24787664.ece
Title:	Rains trigger outbreak of viral infection in children in Chennai, Tamil Nadu			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- Chennai , SSU- Tamil Nadu			

Evening showers in the last few days may have brought cheer to many, but the intermittent rains have raised the risk of viral infections in the city, say doctors.

Doctors have been getting a steady stream of children with symptoms of viral infection, particularly fever, cough and cold, and a few with diarrhoea. Personal hygiene and sanitation are key to prevention of such complaints, they say.

“Viral infection — cold, cough, fever and loose stools — spreads quickly. But at the same time, it is self-limiting,” said Dr. P. Ramkumar, a senior paediatric consultant. Over the last fortnight, he has treated several children who have been having viral fever and cough.

Humid conditions, following intermittent rains, are conducive for viruses to proliferate, says Dr. R. Githa, consultant paediatrician and neonatologist, Prashanth Hospitals. “These affect children aged two to six. Parents should avoid taking children to crowded places such as theatres and air-conditioned halls. Home remedies such as steam inhalation can be tried for a runny nose while medical

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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should be sought for severe dry cough," she said. In case of high fever, plenty of fluids should be taken to prevent dehydration.

It is not just fever

Dr. A. Balachandran, paediatric pulmonologist at Dr. Mehta Children's Hospital, said the infection spread through droplets when someone coughs or sneezes. "I have been receiving children with low-grade fever and dry cough. It is not fever alone, but it has multiple presentations such as headache, nasal block, sneezing, dry hacking cough, itching in the throat, pain in the ear and sometimes mild diarrhoea. The infection spreads easily in this weather," he said.

An unwell child should not be sent to school and should rest for two or three days, he said. "Parents should not start antibiotics without consulting a doctor. Smoking inside the house should be avoided," he said.

Dr. Ramkumar stressed on the need to drink only boiled water. It is important to prevent mosquito breeding to keep the vector-borne diseases at bay, he added.

"It is important to teach children to cover their mouth with tissue when sneezing or coughing and then dispose it in the bin. They should wash their hands with soap to kill the germs. Catch it, bin it, and kill it," he said.

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