

1. H3N2 - Influenza

Prelims Syllabus: Medicine and Pharmaceuticals

Mains Syllabus: GS-II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector or Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.



Why in News?

- Across India, an outbreak of a respiratory illness with symptoms of cold, sore throat and fever accompanied by fatigue has been observed since December 2022 and January 2023.

About the News:

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) confirmed that Influenza Sub-type H3N2 has been causing this illness.
- It further warned that the virus appeared to lead to more hospitalisations than other Influenza subtypes.

What is H3N2 Virus?

- H3N2 virus is a type of influenza virus called the influenza A virus. It is a respiratory viral infection that causes illnesses every year. This subtype of influenza A virus was discovered in 1968 in humans.
- The virus derives from types of protein strains of the influenza A virus – hemagglutinin (HA) and neuraminidase (NA).
- HA has over 18 different subtypes, each numbered H1 to H18 while NA has 11 different subtypes, each numbered N1 to N11. The H3N2 is a combination of the two protein strains of the influenza A virus.

Symptoms of H3N2 Virus:

- The symptoms of the H3N2 virus include cough, runny nose or congested nose, sore throat, headaches, body aches, fever, chills, fatigue, diarrhoea, vomiting and breathlessness.

Treatment for H3N2 Virus:

- Regular over-the-counter medications for fever, cough or headaches can be consumed to relieve the symptoms.
- Annual flu shots for the influenza virus should be administered and taken around this time.

Types of Influenza Virus:

- **There are four types of influenza viruses:** influenza A, B, C and D
- Influenza A and B are the two types of influenza that cause epidemic seasonal infections nearly every year.
- Influenza C mainly occurs in humans, but has been known to also occur in dogs and pigs.
- Influenza D is found mainly in cattle. It's not known to infect or cause illness in humans yet.

