

H3 N2 Influenza

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In news— The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has said that rising cases of intense cough lasting for over a week coupled with fever, observed in most parts of the country, can be linked to Influenza A H3N2.

What is H3N2?

- **Also known as the “Hong Kong flu,” H3N2 is a type of influenza virus that can cause respiratory illness in humans.**
- It is **a subtype of the Influenza A virus** and has been responsible for several influenza outbreaks in the past.
- Influenza A H3N2 variant viruses (also known as “H3N2v” viruses) with the matrix (M) gene from the 2009 H1N1 pandemic virus were first detected in people in July 2011.
- **The viruses were first identified in U.S. pigs in 2010.**
- During 2011, 12 human infections with H3N2v were detected.
- Infections with H3N2v have mostly been **associated with prolonged exposure to pigs at agricultural fairs.**
- **Limited human-to-human spread of this virus** has been detected in the past as well but no sustained or community spread of H3N2v has been identified at this time.
- **It’s possible that sporadic infections and even localized outbreaks among people** with this virus will continue to occur.
- **H3N2 influenza is highly contagious and can spread from person to person** through droplets generated when an infected person talks, coughs, or sneezes.
- It can also spread by touching a surface contaminated with the virus and then touching one’s mouth or nose.
- **H3N2 symptoms are,** Fever, chills, cough, nausea,

vomiting, sore throat, muscle and body aches, diarrhoea, runny nose and sneezing.

- **Treatment for H3N2 influenza includes rest, drinking plenty of fluids,** and taking over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen to reduce fever and relieve pain.
- **Antiviral medications like oseltamivir and zanamivir may also be prescribed** by a doctor for people with severe symptoms or those who are at high risk of complications.