



Adenovirus

What is adenovirus?

Adenoviruses are a group of viruses known to cause the “common cold”, as well as other types of infections such as diarrhea, pink eye, bladder infections, and skin rashes.

Who can get an adenovirus?

Anyone can experience illness due to adenoviruses. Infants, people with weakened immune systems, or existing heart and lung disease are at higher risk of getting sick from an adenovirus infection.

What are the symptoms of an adenovirus?

Adenoviruses can cause a wide-range of symptoms, including fever, chills, headache, general muscle aches, tiredness, lack of appetite, runny nose, sore throat, and lung infections such as bronchitis or pneumonia. The flu-like symptoms caused by adenoviruses are generally less severe than those of influenza. Adenoviruses can also cause reddened eyes and sometimes swelling of the eye tissue.

How and when is adenovirus spread?

Adenoviruses are usually spread from an infected person to others through close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands; the air by coughing and sneezing; and touching an object or surface with adenoviruses on it then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands. Some adenoviruses can spread through an infected person’s stool, for example, during diaper changing.

How soon after exposure do symptoms of an adenovirus appear?

Symptoms of adenovirus infections occur from 2 days to 2 weeks after exposure.

How is an adenovirus diagnosed?

A physician may collect a specimen, such as a nose or throat swab, and send it to a laboratory to isolate the virus.

What is the treatment for an adenovirus?

There is no specific treatment for adenovirus except managing the symptoms. This would include getting plenty of rest, drinking plenty of fluids, as well as using fever-reducing medicines. Antibiotics cannot treat adenovirus. Adenovirus symptoms last from a few days to a week. Severe lung infections, such as pneumonia, may last as long as 2 to 4 weeks.

What can be done to control or prevent infection with adenovirus?

You can protect yourself and others from adenovirus infection by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water;
- Covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing;
- Not touching your eyes, nose, or mouth;
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick;
- Staying home when you are sick; and
- Frequent hand washing, which is especially important in childcare settings.