

# Clinical Features and general Symptoms of COVID-19 Illness and Influenza: Differentiation and Similarities

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## 1. Abstract

Cold, cough, and pain in the pharynx accompanied by fever, seem to be symptoms of influenza, and people often hope that it will be a transient cold, but today it may be an infection with the Corona virus. The difficulty lies in diagnosing the cause of infection, is it viral or bacterial.

The distinction between the traditional flu and the corona virus is very important, and the importance of this topic comes from the fears that control people as a result of the similarity between the symptoms between them, and in fact, there are many viruses that show symptoms similar to corona and the traditional (seasonal) flu when infected due to the wideness of the circle and range of similar viruses. Most notably, the SARS disease that causes COVID-19. Fever, chills, body aches and cough, the symptoms all look the same between colds, flu, seasonal allergies, and the emerging corona virus that also known as COVID-19. The aim of this descriptive minireview, generally, is to shed light on the main clinical characteristics and the main symptoms of COVID-19 disease that differentiate it from influenza virus.

## 2. Introduction

Colds and influenza are active in the period between changes of seasons, to become at the forefront of health problems at the present time and the end of the winter season, which causes a state of confusion between influenza and corona symptoms, especially with the entry of the third wave and the increasing number of infection with the virus.

The first difference between COVID-19 and influenza is the virus

that causes them. While both diseases are caused by viruses, influenza is caused by different types and strains of influenza viruses.

There are 3 main types of influenza viruses: types A, B and C. Mutations occur within these viruses, resulting in different strains. The World Health Organization conducts research each year to predict which strains of influenza viruses are most likely to circulate each year.

As for the Corona virus known as COVID-19, it is caused by a virus that belongs to a family of Corona viruses, and there are several types of Corona viruses that cause diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and a type has been identified. The corona virus that causes COVID-19 in 2019 is known as SARS-CoV-2 or SARS-CoV-2 for short.

Many are afraid of infection with the Corona virus, as its symptoms are similar to the symptoms of regular influenza, as there are similarities between the symptoms of influenza virus infection and the Corona virus, but it is possible to differentiate between them when performing a laboratory blood test, as the symptoms of infection with the Corona virus are more severe, and it increases danger with the passage of days, while the symptoms of influenza are simple, and their intensity decreases with time, and it is possible to distinguish between the Corona virus and influenza by reviewing, methods of infection, methods of reproduction and prevention, types, symptoms, how to diagnose, and the incubation period of the disease.

Influenza is a fast-spreading infection that affects the body in the

winter season, and the disease affects different age groups, and is caused by a group of viruses that infect birds and mammals, and there are five types of the virus: A, B, and C, isavirus, and Tototovirus, which are similar Viruses A, B, and C in the structure, and they infect the upper respiratory tract, and cause pneumonia. Influenza is one of the most common infectious diseases. It is a highly contagious seasonal disease, especially in the winter season. The peak of infection is in January and February. It affects 5-15% of people annually, causing 5 million people to be hospitalized throughout the year and leading to 650 deaths. A thousand cases a year. Patients with chest allergies are the most vulnerable to influenza complications, which necessitates the need to adhere to the treatment of these allergies, especially during influenza seasons.

### 3. Coronavirus: SARS-CoV-2

Corona virus belongs to the coronavirus family, and it takes on a crown-like character when seen using a microscope, and its diameter reaches 150 nanometers, and the chance of its reproduction is faster than any other virus, and the Arab countries recorded percentages in the number of infections with this disease and Saudi Arabia was at the top of the pyramid in the number Those infected with it, followed by the Arab Emirates and then the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Among the types of corona virus is what is known as the corona that causes respiratory syndrome in the Middle East, or the Corona virus in the Middle East, or Corona Novel, and it is abbreviated as (MERS-CoV), which is the abbreviation of the English words (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), and it was discovered in the Saudi capital, Jeddah, in The twenty-fourth of September 2012, and the attempt to isolate the virus from the body of a deceased man had been crowned with success, after he had symptoms similar to those of influenza, but they developed with time; such as kidney failure.

### 4. Viral Multiplication

The life journey of the Corona virus in the human body begins when the genetic material of the Corona virus reaches the cytoplasm of the infected cell, and it begins to multiply, sending RNA. It is more common than other viruses due to the lack of a copying process, and with regard to the issue of the emergence of the Corona virus from the influenza virus, it is a completely false fact because both of them belong to a different viral family, but there is a similarity in the symptoms of infection with them only. The incubation period of the Corona virus lasts for up to twelve days, and the virus can maintain its life and spread under certain conditions that allow it to multiply, such as on dry surfaces and in a liquid environment, for a maximum of six days.

### 5. Symptoms

Mild symptoms of infection with the emerging coronavirus "COVID-19" in itself are not dangerous, but in some cases in the elderly and people with underlying health problems the condition can develop, which requires some care in the emergency room or

urgent care center, especially if it is Hospitals are overwhelmed with acute cases.

The incubation period The period of spread of the Corona virus in the body to seize it extends to 14 days from the date of infection, which occurs either through inhalation or when you touch a contaminated surface and then touch your face after that.

The virus first infects the cells lining the throat, trachea and lung, then turns them into "coronavirus factories" that produce huge amounts of other viruses that infect more cells.

The incubation period, (the time between infection with the virus and the appearance of symptoms), varies greatly from person to person, but it averages up to 5 days.

The coronavirus patient has a fever with a temperature of 37.8°C (100°F), a persistent dry cough, and a loss of taste and smell.

Sometimes the patient may also suffer from fatigue, aches and pains, sore throat, headache and shortness of breath, and rarely, diarrhea, runny or stuffy nose, and the NHS says symptoms can range from mild to severe.

Symptoms of influenza include fever, fatigue, dry cough, aches and pains, and headaches, and patients sometimes have a runny or stuffy nose or sore throat.

Diarrhea can sometimes occur in children, there is no sneezing or shortness of breath with influenza, and the NHS notes that symptoms often appear quickly.

Corona disease is characterized by the loss of the senses of taste and smell, as this symptom disappears when suffering from influenza, a cold or suffering from allergies.

### 6. Conclusion

It is important to take advantage of influenza vaccination to reduce the risks in the event of a fourth wave, especially since the vaccination of the targeted with influenza blocks the way for the progress of Corona and its spread in societies, and on the contrary, if vaccination is not done, COVID-19 allows them to be stormed, put them in intensive care units and lose more lives.

He pointed out that pneumonia is a complication of influenza and is the cause of death, and that those exposed to pneumonia are the target group for infection with the influenza virus and corona either together at the same time or one after the other.

Noting that the presence of pneumonia due to influenza facilitates the path for Covid-19 to kill the patient, as well as the presence of pneumonia due to Corona facilitates the path for influenza to kill the patient.

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