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Title:	**Seasonal strike Hospitals see spike in swine flu cases, Delhi**
Action By CSU, IDSP –NCDC	Information communicated to SSU- Delhi

Change in weather has led to a sharp rise in cases of viral illnesses other than Covid-19. The city hospitals said they were flooded with cases of seasonal influenza, and compared with last year, also witnessed a significant rise in cases of swine flu — also known as the H1N1 virus.

"At least two patients confirmed positive for swine flu are admitted to our hospital," said Dr Rajesh Chawla, senior consultant, pulmonology and critical care, Apollo Hospital.

He added that both patients came with high fever and breathing difficulty, which are also Covid-19 symptoms. "But tests showed they didn't suffer from Covid. Therefore, we ran more tests and found that they had swine flu," Dr Chawla said.

Swine flu led to a pandemic in India in 2009. However, over the last few years, its cases have reduced significantly, and most people affected by it tend to recover without any serious complications, said Dr Rommel Tickko, director, internal medicine at Max Saket. "There has been a sudden surge in cases of seasonal influenza. Instances of swine flu have also gone up, but that's quite usual for this

time of the year. People rush to hospitals mostly because they fear that the symptoms could be caused due to Covid-19," he added.

According to Dr Atul Gogia, senior consultant, internal medicine, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, of all the patients coming with complaints of high fever, cough, and chest congestion, 80% were cases of seasonal flu. "Around 20% cases are of swine flu," he said. "Covid is still here, but other influenza viruses existing before have also not waned completely. We tell our patients not to panic and take all precautions," said another doctor.

Both Covid-19 and flu (also referred to as seasonal influenza) cause respiratory disease and are transmitted by contact, droplets, and fomites. Yet, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are a few differences between the two infections and how they spread. "Influenza has a shorter median incubation period (the time from infection to appearance of symptoms)," the WHO said, adding that, while the range of symptoms for the two viruses was similar, the fraction with severe disease appeared different. Covid-19 causes higher mortality compared to seasonal influenza.

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