

INFECTIOUS DISEASES - II
ACUTE VIRAL RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES

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Abstract: *Acute respiratory illness by viruses is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in children. A systematic approach is necessary to diagnose, treat and control the disease and also to prevent inadvertent use of antibiotics. This review article discusses the epidemiology, clinical features, management and prevention of viral respiratory illnesses among children in developing countries with particular emphasis on influenza and respiratory syncytial virus.*

Keywords: *Acute respiratory illness, Influenza, Respiratory syncytial virus*

Points to Remember

- *Influenza infection in children may lead to asymptomatic illness to severe respiratory distress. Empirical oseltamivir should be started immediately in epidemics, if suspicion of influenza is present.*
- *RSV is the most common viral illness in infants, especially below 6 months of age. Palivizumab can be used in high risk group who get exposed to the virus.*
- *Oxygen and hydration are the only evidence-based therapies approved for bronchiolitis.*
- *Treatment with anti virals should not be withheld, based on rapid diagnostic tests alone as there are chances of false negative results.*
- *More epidemiological studies are needed in developing countries, so that it can help in framing guidelines, following preventive measures and framing vaccination policies.*

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