

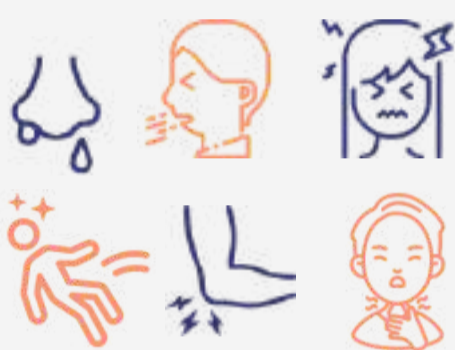
NAVIGATING THE COVID-19 LANDSCAPE

The JN.1 Variant:

Originating from the Omicron variant, the JN.1 SARS-CoV-2 variant surfaced globally, debuting in India in September 2022. Fastforward to December 2023, JN.1 established itself as the prevailing COVID-19 strain in India and worldwide.

KEY MUTATIONS

- Alteration in spike protein that makes it easier for the virus to bind to cells.
- Adaptations allowing the virus to outsmart antibodies from vaccines and prior infections.



SYMPTOMS

Influenza like illness (ILI) symptoms including runny nose, cough, headache, weakness, muscle ache, sore throat, trouble sleeping
Symptoms last for around 4-5 days

Guidelines from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)

-  Getting vaccinated and boosted against COVID
-  Wearing a mask in public indoor settings.
-  Practicing social distancing.
-  Washing your hands frequently.



Increased Vigilance and Surveillance

Keep a watch on patients presenting with Influenza-like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) and related symptoms.

Suggest testing, particularly RT-PCR tests, and prompt genome sequencing to such patients for early diagnosis.

Despite an upswing in reported cases, the majority exhibit mild symptoms, negating the need for hospitalization. Severe cases primarily affect older individuals and those with comorbidities. Experts unanimously assert that the JN.1 variant does not warrant a booster dose

ACTION

Pharmacists can be the first point of contact. They can advise patients to seek further medical attention from doctors or testing facilities, when they come across patients exhibiting the given symptoms.

In conclusion, the JN.1 variant poses challenges, but strategic adherence to preventive measures and public awareness remain powerful tools in the fight against its spread.

Stay informed, stay vigilant.

Reference • MoHFW website: <https://mohfw.gov.in/>