

Quora



The 5 most common fall illnesses

Just because we are going through a worldwide pandemic at the moment doesn't mean that that other seasonal disorders re taking a backseat. Below are five of the most common problems to affect people at this time of year.

The use of population health data sets and digital tools such as an individual's electronic health record are important in helping the healthcare community be more proactive when treating common fall illnesses. Patterns can be identified that in turn can inform education and engagement efforts. Here are some of the most prevalent diseases during autumn:

1. Influenza

The seasonal flu is consistently one of the most common fall illnesses. People spend more time together indoors, aiding the spread of the virus, and often the general population is unaware that instances of influenza really start to ramp up in autumn.

Providers should work with patients to build an understanding of the importance of the flu shot. Friendly reminders using patient portals and other tools may be enough to boost vaccination rates, which can be effective in minimizing more serious treatment down the line.

2. Seasonal allergies and asthma

Pollen and other particulate matter can be quite common in the fall. This can lead to seasonal allergies among patients, and in turn, colds, bronchitis and other ailments that could be caused by an initial runny nose or sore throat. Individuals living with asthma may also find that the conditions in fall lead to more frequent or severe attacks. These patients should be educated on the risks. For example, rain storms that may be common in autumn can encourage some plants to release more pollen, to the detriment of asthmatics and anyone suffering from seasonal allergies.

3. Arthritis pain

Though arthritis is not a common fall illness, the Arthritis Foundation reported that cooler temperatures can lead to greater joint pain. Weather changes in fall can also be rather volatile, and a drop in atmospheric pressure has been linked to greater discomfort among those living with arthritis. These changes may also cause sinus problems and migraines, according to the Arthritis Foundation.

4. Raynaud Syndrome and heart disease

Raynaud Syndrome is one of the most common fall illnesses, with the most common symptoms associated with this disease such as poor circulation, numbness and swelling. Cooler weather can affect blood flow, and it can be difficult for the body to adapt. Individuals living with heart disease may even experience more pain or difficulty during autumn, for similar reasons, according to the American Heart Association.

5. Seasonal Affective Disorder

This is a common illness that is brought on by shorter days and cooler weather. In many cases, depression can lead to problems sleeping and eating, and make a person more susceptible to illness. Providers should use engagement resources to encourage dialogue and understanding around SAD. Light therapy and other treatments are inexpensive ways for patients to minimize the effects of the disorder, keeping them out of the doctor's office.

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