



Common Childhood Diseases in Infants

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DESCRIPTION

Major reasons of death among children are differing by age. Children below 5 are mostly affected to infectious diseases like malaria, pneumonia, diarrhea, HIV and tuberculosis. For older children, no communicable diseases, injuries and conflict pose significant threats.

Even though being entirely preventable and treatable, common infectious diseases are still taking lives of young children in large numbers. Pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria were the reason for approximately 29% of deaths in the world among children under the age of 5 in 2018. Children in the world's poorest regions are unknowingly affected, with infectious diseases particularly prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa.

While vaccines have made some childhood illnesses rarely, many others remain a fact of life. They range from common infections like croup to mysterious ailments like Kawasaki disease.

Bronchitis

Different viruses cause bronchiolitis (inflammation of the small airways), which affects children below 1 year of age. Most commonly, it is caused by RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), but it can also be caused by influenza and other common viruses associated with upper respiratory symptoms such as fever, runny nose, and cough. A common symptom of bronchiolitis includes all of the above and wheezing (the same symptom observed in children with asthma). It is common in the winter months, and some infants will require admission to a hospital when the respiratory symptoms are very severe. The treatment of bronchiolitis is different from asthma; however, some medications might be used. For a small proportion of babies, this first wheezing episode can signal a future diagnosis of asthma, but in most cases it is a one-off event.

Ear infections

Ear infections are very common in children and are caused by a malfunction of the Eustachian tube, which connects the inner

ear to the throat and acts as an outlet for fluid that can collect there. When water accumulates, it can attract and multiply bacteria and other bacteria, causing symptomatic infections. Symptoms include fever, ear pain, ear tension, and even secretions from the ear canal. Treatment of ear infections may include observations or antibiotics. In some cases, it may be necessary to drain the middle ear.

Croup

Croup is common in young children. Different viruses cause croup, and inflammation of the upper airways, including the larynx (voice box) and trachea (windpipe), cause symptoms. These symptoms include a barking cough and stridor, a wheezing symptom. Lot of children with croup can be treated at home, but occasionally, if severe enough, going to hospital is required. Treatment may include steroids and inhaled medications for severe conditions. Always consult your doctor if you are worried or if your child seems ill.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease

Coxsackie virus causes hand, foot, and mouth disease. It is extremely common during the summer and early fall and resolves on its own after about 10 days. The virus causes fever, sore throat, and blisters inside the mouth, on the palms of the hands, and the soles of the feet. There is no medical treatment for the infection, except supportive care including pain relievers.

Pinkeye

Pinkeye is also called conjunctivitis. A virus is the most common cause of pinkeye, but a bacterial infection can cause it on occasion. Pink eyes are highly contagious and can quickly transmit in school and day care. Always consult your doctor to determine if additional treatment is needed. However, in most cases it will be resolved within 5 days.

Gastroenteritis

Gastroenteritis is also known as the stomach flu, but it is not the

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flu at all. But like the flu, it is caused by a virus that can transmit quickly. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Usually, the symptoms pass within a couple of days and treatment includes rest and giving fluids to avoid dehydration due to vomiting and diarrhea.

Sinusitis

Sinusitis is the technical term for a sinus infection. This is caused

by the build-up of water in the sinuses and the growth of bacteria (bacteria and viruses). Most cases of sinusitis are caused by the virus. Symptoms include runny nose, stuffy nose, headache, tightness and pain on the face, post-nasal drip (mucus drips on the throat), sore throat, cough, and shortness of breath.