

IDRS Infectious Disease Reporting System

Disease Reporting 24 Hours a Day

Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Public Health

KAWASAKI DISEASE

Kawasaki Disease is an illness which typically affects children under the age of 5. It occurs more commonly in boys. It is also called *Mucocutaneous Lymph Node Syndrome*, and the cause is not known. Kawasaki disease was first described in Japan by Tomisaku Kawasaki in 1967, and the first cases outside of Japan were reported in Hawaii in 1976.

Symptoms

The symptoms of *Kawasaki Disease* typically appear in phases.

- The first phase, which lasts from 5-14 days, involves a fever above 104°F. The other symptoms include:
 - Severe redness in the eyes
 - A rash on the child's stomach, chest, and genitals
 - Red, dry, cracked lips
 - Swollen tongue with a white coating and big red bumps
 - Sore, irritated throat
 - Swollen palms of the hands and soles of the feet with a purple-red color
 - Swollen lymph nodes in the neck
- The second phase usually begins within two weeks of when the fever first started, and includes:
 - Peeling skin on the child's hands and feet especially the tips of the finger and toes
 - Joint pain
 - Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
- Serious complications include weakening of the blood vessel walls in the heart.

Transmission

- Kawasaki disease occurs worldwide, most often in Japan and especially during winter and spring. It most often affects boys and younger children. Children of Asian descent have a slightly higher risk than others.
- Kawasaki Disease is not contagious. People cannot transmit it to each other.
- No one knows what causes Kawasaki disease or how people get it. Sometimes, outbreaks occur in certain communities, but scientists have not yet found a reason for these clusters.

Treatment

- There is no single test to diagnose Kawasaki Disease. A health care provider need to examine the ill person for symptoms and signs of the disease to make the diagnosis.
- A child has the best chance of recovery if they begin treatment within 10 days from when fever first began. The treatment for Kawasaki disease involves aspirin and another medicine called immunoglobulin that must be given through an IV line. This helps prevent heart problems from developing.
- Never give a child aspirin unless directed by a health care provider—this can cause other problems.
- A health care provider may take an EKG or Echocardiogram to look for possible heart problems.

Prevention

- Unfortunately, since no one knows the cause of Kawasaki disease, it is not known if anything can be done to protect people from getting it.
- If your child has a fever that won't go away even with antibiotics, seek medical treatment right away.

All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.



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