

Short Note on Gastroenteritis

Mekonen Lidya*

Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of Toronto, Canada

DESCRIPTION

Gastroenteritis is a condition in which the intestines become inflamed (irritated). It is usually referred to as “stomach bug” or “stomach flu” despite the fact that it is not limited to influenza. The most frequent symptom is stomach pain, although gastroenteritis can also damage the small intestine and colon. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and stomach cramps are all symptoms of this sickness. It normally only lasts a few days and isn't life-threatening. The majority of children improve at home by relaxing and drinking plenty of fluids.

Symptoms

Despite the fact that it is commonly referred to as stomach flu, gastroenteritis is not the same as influenza. Gastroenteritis is an infection of the intestines that causes signs and symptoms such as:

- Diarrhea that is usually watery and not bloody. When the GI tract is infected with gastroenteritis, the virus's numerous activities cause diarrhoea. Malabsorption occurs when enterocytes, or gut cells, are damaged. The virus can also prevent water from being absorbed and cause secretory diarrhoea, which results in loose, liquid stools.
- Nausea, vomiting or both
- Stomach cramps and pain
- Occasional muscle aches or headache
- Low-grade fever

Causes

When a person consumes contaminated food or water, he or she is more prone to contract viral gastroenteritis. If a person exchanges utensils, towels, or food with someone who has one of the viruses that causes the ailment, they may contract gastroenteritis. Viruses can cause gastroenteritis, including the following:

Noroviruses: Noroviruses, the most common cause of foodborne illness worldwide, infect both children and adults. The norovirus

can infect entire families and towns. It has a higher proclivity for spreading among those who live in close quarters.

Rotavirus: This is the most prevalent cause of viral gastroenteritis in children worldwide, who are usually infected. When children insert their contaminated fingers or other contaminated things into their mouth, they may get infected. It can also be spread through contaminated food. Infants and small children are the most exposed to the virus.

Diagnosis

When doctors learn about the symptoms, they can normally detect if someone has stomach flu. In most cases, no testing is required. Doctors may order a stool test, urine test, or blood test if a child is really unwell or has blood or mucus in their stool to check for dehydration and determine what's causing it.

Treatment

When it comes to viral gastroenteritis, there isn't always a precise medical treatment. Self-care practices, such as staying hydrated, are the initial step in treatment. The majority of teenagers can be treated at home. Offer plenty of liquids to keep child hydrated. Dehydrated children may require treatment in the emergency room or in the hospital.

Oral rehydration is used to treat mild dehydration. Usually, this entails administering an oral rehydration solution (such as Pedialyte, Enfalyte, or a store brand). It has the appropriate proportions of water, sugar, and salt to aid in dehydration. It is available in drugstores and supermarkets without a prescription.

Prevention

Because stomach flu can be caused by a variety of circumstances, the flu vaccine alone will not protect from gastroenteritis. Children should adhere to the recommended immunization schedule and receive the rotavirus vaccine when needed. This vaccine can help prevent rotavirus infections in children. Gastroenteritis-causing germs are infectious. Keeping the germs from spreading is the best approach to avoid getting sick.

Correspondence to: Mekonen Lidya, Department of Allied Health Sciences, University of Toronto, Canada, E-mail: lidyamekonen@gmail.edu.ca

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