

Acute Infective Gastroenteritis

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Introduction

Acute infective gastroenteritis is common health problem, especially in childhood, which may lead to serious complications if left untreated or not addressed promptly and properly. It is christened as Atisara in Ayurveda. As we all are aware, resistance to antibiotics and their limitations are the emerging medical concerns. That further makes management of infections with safer, bio friendly drugs, with broad therapeutic utility are better options. Hence cases of acute infective diarrhea are treated with Ayurvedic management by dietary food stuffs (medicated water, soup), decoction prepared from spices (ginger and coriander seeds) and their powders. The cases of acute infective diarrhea occur due to consumption of unhygienic food and water coupled with and or provoked by faulty dietary and routine practices. They are being successfully treated with Ayurvedic formulations of Ginger and Coriander seeds.

Gastroenteritis is usually caused by viruses. However, bacteria, parasites, and fungus can also cause gastroenteritis. In children, rotavirus is the most common cause of severe disease. In adults, norovirus and Campylobacter are common causes. Eating improperly prepared food, drinking contaminated water or close contact with a person who is infected can spread the disease. Treatment is generally the same with or without a definitive diagnosis, so testing to confirm is usually not needed. Prevention includes hand washing with soap, drinking clean water, breastfeeding babies instead of using formula and proper disposal of human waste. The rotavirus vaccine is recommended as prevention for children. Treatment involves getting enough fluids. For mild or moderate cases, this can typically be achieved by drinking oral rehydration solution (a combination of water, salts and sugar. In those who are breastfed, continued breastfeeding is recommended. For more severe cases, intravenous fluids may be needed. Fluids may also be given by a nasogastric tube. Zinc supplementation is recommended in children. Antibiotics are generally not needed. However, antibiotics are recommended for young children with a fever and bloody diarrhea. Another bacteria, shigella, is often passed around in day care centers. It typically is spread from person to person, and common sources of infection are contaminated food and drinking water. Parasites can also cause gastroenteritis, but it's not common. You can pick up organisms such as giardia and cryptosporidium in contaminated swimming pools or by drinking contaminated water. Rotavirus is the world's most common cause of diarrhea in infants and young children. To help prevent rotavirus the most common cause of stomach flu for children there are two vaccines that can be given to infants. Talk to your doctor about the vaccines.

When you have diarrhea and vomiting, you may say you have the "stomach flu." These symptoms often are due to a condition called gastroenteritis your stomach and intestines are irritated and inflamed. The cause is typically a viral or bacterial infection. Bacterial gastroenteritis has many causes, can range from mild to severe, and typically manifests with symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal discomfort. It is usually self-limited, but improper management of an acute infection can lead to a protracted course.

Stomach Flu in Children

Children can get dehydrated quickly, so if your child has the stomach flu, it's important that you look for signs that they are very thirsty or has dry skin or a dry mouth. If you have a baby, look for fewer, drier diapers. Keep children with gastroenteritis out of day care or school until all symptoms are gone. Check with your doctor before giving your child any medicine. Drugs used to control diarrhea and vomiting aren't usually given to children younger than 5.

Gastroenteritis is usually uncomfortable but self-limited. Electrolyte and fluid loss is usually little more than an inconvenience to an otherwise healthy adult but can be grave for people who are very young (see Dehydration in Children), elderly, or immune compromised or who have serious concomitant illnesses. Worldwide, an estimated 1.5 to 2.5 million children die each year from infectious gastroenteritis although high, this number represents one half to one quarter of previous mortality. Improvements in water sanitation in many parts of the world and the appropriate use of oral rehydration therapy for infants with diarrhea are likely responsible for this decrease. Mucosal invasion occurs with other bacteria Shigella, Salmonella, Campylobacter, C. difficile, some Escherichia coli subtypes that invade the mucosa of the small bowel or colon and cause microscopic ulceration, bleeding, exudation of protein-rich fluid, and secretion of electrolytes and water. The invasive process and its results can occur whether or not the organism produces an enterotoxin. The resulting diarrhea contains WBCs and RBCs and sometimes gross blood. Salmonella and Campylobacter are common bacterial causes of diarrheal illness in the US. Both infections are most frequently acquired through undercooked poultry; unpasteurized milk is also a possible.

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