PROTECT YOUR CHILD FROM DENGUE

(Information folder)

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DENGUE

Dengue has become a major public concern. The number of Dengue cases has increased three fold. It is essential to identify Dengue fever and to recognize warning signs. This information leaflet is a guide for assessment and home based management.

Among all affected with severe Dengue, 90% are children < 5 years and 2.5% result in mortality.

What is Dengue?

Dengue is an illness caused by the Dengue virus. There are 4 types of dengue virus. Infection that occurs for the first time by any Dengue virus is called primary infection and these results in mild symptoms. Infection for the second time with another type of dengue virus called secondary infection can lead to severe Dengue.

How does it spread?

Dengue is transmitted by Aedes mosquito, a relatively small mosquito with characteristic black and white striped body and legs. These mosquitoes mostly live indoors and bite during the day. They bite more than one person for a complete meal. Infected human blood with dengue virus is transmitted to the mosquito during a bite and this infected mosquito remains infectious for the rest of its life. These mosquitoes breed in fresh water even in small containers inside and outside our own homes.

This mosquito does not fly too far and it is human movement which contributes to the spread of disease.

Seasonality of Dengue

Dengue epidemics occur when the mosquito population increases which is usually during and after the rainy season. Dengue is more prevalent between July and December with a peak in October in Vellore.

Types of Dengue infection

Many patients with dengue do not have any symptoms. Some can present as fever with body pain (dengue fever) or dengue fever with bleeding (dengue haemorrhagic fever) or dengue haemorrhagic fever with low blood pressure (dengue shock syndrome). Dengue haemorrhagic fever and Dengue shock syndrome are manifestations of Severe Dengue
Symptoms

• Fever for 2 to 7 days
• Skin rash
• Pain behind the eyes
• Pain in the bones
• Body pain
• Cold hands and feet
• Puffiness of face
• Bleeding

Warning signs

• Persistent vomiting
• Inability to drink
• Severe Abdominal pain
• Lethargy / giddiness
• Restlessness / irritability
• Any bleeding
• Decreased urine or no urine for 6 hours
• Cold hands and feet

Risk Factors

• Young children < 2 years
• Obese children
• Children with heart, kidney or blood disorders
• On steroids

Laboratory findings

• White cell count may be normal or low in the first 5 days of fever.
• Low platelet counts between day 3 to 10 of fever usually < 100000. The platelet count reduces when the fever starts coming down and can precede shock symptoms.
Home care advice for Dengue patients

- Bed rest. Do not allow child to play.
- Plenty of fluids - milk, fruit juice, oral rehydration solution (ORS) and barley/rice water.
- AVOID PLAIN WATER
- Beware of over hydration in infants and young children.
- Give Paracetamol for fever. If temperature is high DO TEPID SPONGING of forehead, armpits and extremities.
- Avoid Aspirin/ Ibuprofen

When to see the doctor?

- If a child has fever and any of the warning signs or has any high risk factors, the child must be taken to the doctor.

Prevention of Dengue:

- Observing ‘dry days’ by emptying all non-essential water containers (such as flowerpot basins, birdbaths, etc. once a week on a particular day, thereby preventing the egg/larva from completing its life cycle,
- Covering all domestic water storage containers,
- Overturning and appropriate disposal of discarded receptacles such as broken tins, buckets, tyres, plastic covers, coconut shells, discarded tyres or any inadvertent water collections.
- Repellent applications on skin, daytime sleeping under bed-net, vaporised repellents used indoors