



Healthy Life

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News Letter



Dr Yogesh P Mehta
Consultant Paediatrics

This passage from opening soliloquy of Shakespeare's famous play depicts the type of patient that neonatologists deal with every day. Though the neonatal period extends over the first four weeks of life, it contributes to over 50% of the infant mortality rate & morbidity.

Management of sick neonate requires early diagnosis & prompt treatment. Neonatal care has achieved its due recognition & now the focus has shifted to the care of critically sick babies to have maximum intact survival. Our endeavour at Dr L H Hiranandani Hospital is to give very committed & precise neonatal care, so that childbirth which is the most beautiful, miraculous & probably the single most dangerous event that most of us have to encounter in our lifetime, can be managed in the most beautiful way.

PAEDIATRIC

*"...I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling Nature,
Deform'd, unfinished, sent before my time Into
this breathing world, scarce half made up, And
that so lamely and unfashionable That dogs bark
at me as I halt by them"*

- William Shakespeare



Dehydration in Breast-fed Newborns

Dr Bijal Shrivastava
Consultant Paediatrician



Universally a newborn is exclusively breast-fed till 6 months of age as it has tremendous benefits to the baby and mother. All healthy babies (except small weight, preterm or sick babies) do not need any supplemental feeds, as they have enough glucose stores in their body. The breast-fed babies will have reduced wet nappy count for the first 5 days, and then have frequency of 8 - 10 times in 24 hours thereon. Babies lose 8 - 10% of their weight in initial 3 days and regain back their birth weight by 10th - 15th day.

The sodium content of breast milk varies such that in the immediate post-delivery it is very high and then reduces to normal levels by 5th - 7th day of life. In cases of lactation failure (where breast milk is insufficient), the sodium content fails to drop and hence these breast-fed babies can go into high-sodium dehydration. In this condition, there is less water and more sodium in the body, which if untreated can cause brain damage.

Babies who are having this dehydration will show following symptoms by 7th - 15th day of life:

- Less than 5 - 6 wet nappies in 24 hours
- Less than 2 - 3 yellow stools in 24 hours
- Have an irritable and high pitched cry • Show reduced activity
- Loss of greater than 15 % birth weight • Fever

Hence, if these symptoms appear in your baby in the first 2 - 3 weeks of life, medical consultation should be sought immediately. Depending on the severity of dehydration, baby will be given extra fluids either by intravenous

route or orally (formula feeds). In addition, measures to increase breast milk production are started for the mother in form of oral medicines.

Certain guidelines to avoid this medical condition in the baby:

- Successful breast-feeding to be established before discharge
- Mother should consume 2 - 3 litres of liquids and should never feel her mouth to be dry
- She can judge if she is having adequate milk by feeling fullness of breast before feeding
- Keep the baby normothermic as high temperatures can cause fluid loss in the baby
- Ensure that baby has more than 8 wet nappies from 5th day of life and the urine is pale white and non-smelly
- Baby should be weighed at birth, 3rd or 5th day and 10th day of life

'To tackle this condition, an initiative has been started at Dr L H Hiranandani hospital wherein a trained nurse visits the discharged newborn at home and provides the correct advice.'

This article is not meant to discourage exclusive breast feeding of babies, but to increase awareness amongst mothers so that they can seek early medical help for lactation failure. Hence, a vigilant mother can successfully breast-feed her baby till 6 months without any problem of this kind in her baby.

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D for DIARRHEA

Dr Archana Kavalakkat
Consultant Pediatrician and Neonatologist



What is diarrhea?

Diarrhea is the frequent passage of loose and watery stool. In fact, the definition may vary from child to child. A newborn baby can pass loose watery stools up to 10-12 times in a day. This is completely normal and is common in breast-fed babies. Therefore, if the frequency of stooling is more than what is normal for your child, we can call it diarrhea.

Bacterial diarrhea - It is seen most often due to consumption of contaminated food or water. It can be seen in bottle-fed babies, due to unhygienic practices when preparing feeds. Not washing hands, handling the nipple with fingers, not covering the nipple with a cap, and not using boiled water can be responsible.

Viral diarrhea - Viral diarrheas are very common and can be very severe. The most common virus causing diarrhea is the ROTAVIRUS. Viral diarrheas do not need antibiotics for treatment, and have to be treated symptomatically. Unnecessary use of antibiotics does more harm than good.

Pearls of advice for diarrhea

- In diarrhea, give your child plenty of liquids orally. Homemade items

like dal water, rice kanji, coconut water, thin buttermilk and bland vegetable or chicken stock are good to give your child in diarrhea.

- Please prepare readymade ORS solutions like Electrobion, Electral, or Punarjal by following instructions or after consulting your doctor. Pedialyte-90 is a ready-to-use ORS solution.
- Diet during diarrheas should be light. Try to give your child rice-based food like kanji, khichdi, mashed rice, and curd rice. Fruits such as banana, stewed apple, papaya and pomegranate may be consumed during this phase. Fruit juices may cause watery stools due to their sugar content.
- Avoid milk in bigger children. In smaller children and infants however, milk may be given in 50% dilution till the stools are watery, then reduce the dilution over the next 2-3 days. Full milk may be given after about a week.

Danger Signs in Diarrhea:

- Contact your doctor if the child is passing large watery stool which look like 'rice kanji'
- Excessive vomiting because of which the child is unable to retain ORS
- Signs of dehydration such as sunken eyeballs, dry tongue and demands a lot of water
- Child is dull, drowsy or irritable
- Child refuses to take anything orally and prefers to sleep
- Passes very less and concentrated (dark colored) urine
- Breathes faster than normal
- Has cold extremities and looks pale

If any of these signs are present, your child may need to be admitted in the hospital for intravenous fluid therapy. So, visit your doctor at the earliest in such a situation.

Boil the water you drink.

Diarrhea is never caused due to teething.

Vaccinate your child against waterborne diseases such as typhoid (every 3 years) and Hepatitis A. Recently a vaccine against rotaviral diarrhea has been introduced, which can be given to infants less than 6 months of age.



Dealing with Your 'Wheezy Child'

Dr Archana Kavalakkat
Consultant Pediatrician and Neonatologist



Wheezing is a very common manifestation of respiratory problems in small children because of their soft airway. However not all 'wheezing' is asthma. Most children with wheezing related to childhood, stop wheezing by 5-6 yrs of age.

Asthma is a chronic condition with symptoms that can be aggravated from time to time. Some of the most successful people in our society suffer from asthma and lead highly active and productive lives.

Inhalation therapy, i.e. nebulizers, and metered dose inhalers (puffs or pumps) have revolutionized the treatment of asthma. Many parents shy away from using inhalers due to several misconceptions. Discuss these thoughts with your doctor. Recurrent bouts of wheezing may lead to permanent changes in the lungs. Maintenance therapy with inhalers helps prevent this. The child will be able to lead a very normal life if aided by this therapy. Inhalers are certainly not 'addictive'.

Advantages of this treatment:

- 1) Ease of administration
- 2) Drug delivered at site of action
- 3) Quick relief from symptoms
- 4) Doses are very small; microgram doses of drugs as compared to milligrams in oral therapy
- 5) Steroids are more safely given in this form
- 6) Cost effective as visits to the hospital are minimized

There are various triggers for asthma. These can be dealt with as follows:

- 1) **Dust mite:** Remove carpets that gather dust. Use cotton sheets rather than woollen blankets. Sun the room. Dust mattresses periodically and expose to sunlight. Keep soft toys away from sleep area and wash weekly with hot water.

- 2) **Molds and spores:** Attend to damp walls and leakages. Clean air conditioner filters monthly.
- 3) **Cockroach antigen** - Improve general hygiene. Insecticide spraying to be done when child is away.
- 4) **Animal Dander** - If possible, give pet away. Pets should not be allowed in sleeping area. Bathe pet weekly.
- 5) **Pollen (Flowers)** - Avoid flowering plants indoors
- 6) **Smoke (cigarettes, agarbattis, crackers)**
- 7) **Mosquito repellent mats** - Use long clothing or nets if possible.
- 8) **Weather and temperature changes**
- 9) **Drugs** - Avoid drugs such as aspirin and brufen. Paracetamol is a safe option.
- 10) **Diet** - Food additives like colours and flavours (sulphites, benzoates, monosodium glutamate that is used in Chinese food, and possibly tartrazine) are to be avoided.
- 11) **Dietary Restrictions** - Avoid foods that have consistently caused symptoms in the child. Be careful especially at restaurants and parties.

Some triggers are however unavoidable, such as air pollutants, weather changes, dust due to construction work in vicinity, outdoor plants and pollen coming from them. However, inspite of avoiding all these triggers the child may still suffer from an acute attack at any time. Initiate inhalation therapy at the earliest at home itself after consultation with your doctor. It is advisable to maintain a diary to note down events such as daytime cough, night cough, possible trigger of wheeze, reliever medication used and response to medication. This will help your doctor titrate the medication. Keep a regular follow up with the doctor.





A Nutritional Approach to Balance the Mood and Improve the Concentration

Mrs Richa Anand
Consultant Dietician

1. Make breakfast a mandatory habit

A nutritious breakfast ensures a productive day and a sound start for a child in the morning.

2. Take your child off foods with additives or added sugar

Sugar creates imbalances in energy that can contribute to erratic behaviour and mood changes. So avoid giving your child processed foods and opt instead for natural and alternatives.

3. Increase intake of fruits and vegetables

Rather than letting your child fill up on junk food, give them whole, nutritious food to eat. Ensure their diet is rich in fresh fruit and vegetables, which provide vitamins and minerals essential to support their health while they are growing.

4. Boost levels of essential fats

Some fats like saturated varieties found in processed meats and fried foods are bad for health, but others such as nuts are advised.

5. Supplement the diet

Supplement their diet with a good quality daily multivitamin and mineral designed for children. Essential fats can also be supplemented in the form of fish oil. However, please consult your doctor before starting any supplements.

6. Eliminate allergens from the diet

If you suspect your child is intolerant to a particular food – for example, if they react badly after eating the same thing, or they seem to crave a particular food – eliminate it from their diet and monitor the reaction. If after two weeks, you see no difference in behaviour / symptoms, reintroduce it and see if there is a reaction. If not, then try different suspected food groups until you find what is bothering them.

Some ideas for healthy eating:

- **Breakfast** - Get your child accustomed to eating breakfast no matter how early he / she has to leave the house.
- **Lunch** - Most children eat lunch at school so aim at being creative so that you can pack food, which is nutritious yet attractive.
- **Healthy snacks** - Should be simple and readily available. Replace chivda / wafers with other nutritious snacks or fresh fruit.
- **Dinner** - Should be a family time and not TV time or any other activity like reading. Children should be asked to eat slowly and savour each bite. Dinner is a good time to make children realise the importance of eating and monitor them.



Endorphins



Santa to his friend :

For the last 1 week a girl is disturbing me. I don't know how she got my number. She interrupts whenever I call someone & says please recharge your balance soon.



Amit and wife filed an application for divorce.

Judge: How will you divide, you have three Children?

Amit: Ok!! We will apply next year!



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