



Kawasaki Disease Foundation Aust.

www.kdfoundation.org.au

Kawasaki Disease

Kawasaki Disease (KD) is a serious illness that affects hundreds of Australian children each year and many thousands worldwide. KD primarily affects young children: 75% are under 5 years, however older children and children from all ethnic groups are affected. It is more common in boys than in girls.

Signs and Symptoms of Kawasaki Disease?

Affected children may develop a prolonged high fever, rash, swollen glands, red eyes, red and dry cracked lips, red 'strawberry' tongue, swelling of the hands and feet and later peeling of the skin of the hands and feet. In addition, affected children are very irritable: more than is usual in other childhood infections.

Early Diagnosis & Treatment

If symptoms are recognised early and treatment with intravenous immunoglobulin administered, most children with KD usually make a full recovery; with no long term changes to the coronary arteries seen on echocardiography ("echo," an ultrasound scan of the heart). However some children may develop serious complications affecting the coronary arteries. Coronary artery aneurysms (dilation of the artery due to thinning of the artery wall) are potentially the most serious complication and may result in short-term and long-term problems. Aneurysms and other complications are more likely to occur if the child hasn't been treated for Kawasaki Disease, but may occur rarely in children who have received the appropriate treatment. This is because the treatment is occasionally ineffective in preventing the coronary artery damage.

What causes Kawasaki Disease?

Despite over 50 years of research the precise cause of KD remains unknown. Research into possible genetic links and environmental causes continues.

What are the effects of Kawasaki Disease?

Kawasaki Disease is an inflammatory condition of the arteries of the body. The most serious complication of KD is damage to the arteries of the heart (the coronary arteries). When untreated, up to a quarter of children develop coronary artery damage. Even with treatment around 5% of children will develop coronary artery changes (on echo), which may lead to ongoing problems.

Kawasaki Disease is the leading cause of acquired heart disease in children.

The Kawasaki Disease Foundation Australia

The KD Foundation Australia is a national, voluntary, non-profit, parent-led charity dedicated to advancing Kawasaki Disease issues. The KD Foundation Australia strives to raise awareness of this serious illness to increase early detection and treatment for children. The Foundation also provides much needed information and is a great source of support for affected families. The Foundation also raises funds for research into this mysterious illness.

**To make a tax deductible donation
or for more Information
Please contact**

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Thank you for reading this information.

Please pass on your awareness of Kawasaki Disease; it may just help another child.