



PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET

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Kawasaki Syndrome

What is Kawasaki syndrome?

Kawasaki syndrome causes a fever and affects the skin, mouth and lymph nodes. The cause of this illness is unknown.

Who gets Kawasaki syndrome?

Most cases occur in infants and children under 5 years of age.

How is Kawasaki syndrome spread?

Little is known about how the illness spreads but it does not appear to spread from person to person.

What are the symptoms of Kawasaki syndrome?

A person with Kawasaki syndrome usually has a fever that lasts more than 5 days along with at least 4 more symptoms including irritability or extreme fussiness, rash typically on the stomach, back and chest, redness in both eyes, swollen lymph glands in the neck, redness of the lips and mouth, dry cracked lips, "strawberry" tongue, sore throat, and red, swollen palms and soles that peel later. Persons with Kawasaki syndrome may have an elevated platelet (cells that help the body clot blood) count. In most cases the high fever does not get better when a person takes antibiotics.

Can I get Kawasaki syndrome again?

It is very rare to get Kawasaki syndrome a second time.

What is the treatment for Kawasaki syndrome?

Most patients are treated in the hospital where they can be closely watched. High doses of aspirin and immune globulin (IG) are often given.

What are the complications associated with Kawasaki syndrome?

Most children recover completely. The most frequent complication is coronary artery aneurysms (ballooning out of one of the vessels on the heart). Early treatment can reduce the risk of this complication occurring. Other organs may also be involved.

Can Kawasaki syndrome be prevented?

It is not known how to prevent Kawasaki syndrome at this time.

**For more information, please contact
Boston Public Health Commission
Communicable Disease Control
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