

FACT SHEET

Kawasaki (disease) Syndrome

Kawasaki Syndrome (KS) is an acute febrile rash-type illness, lasting five or more days which also involves the skin, mouth, and lymph nodes, usually affecting children younger than 5 years of age.

Cause: Its cause is unknown, but with early recognition, children can fully recover within a few days; if untreated, it could lead serious complications involving the heart called coronary artery aneurysms (ballooning out of blood vessels in the heart).

Occurrence: KS occurs in 19 out of every 100,000 kids in the United States. It is most common among infants and children; those of Japanese and Korean descent are more at risk, but the illness can affect all ethnic groups. KS is not preventable and little is known about how it spreads although it does not appear to spread from person to person. Reoccurrences have occurred on very rare occasions. You can help your child by learning the typical symptoms.

Symptoms: Usually there are **three** phases:

1st phase: lasts up to 2 weeks with a constant fever of 104 F continuing for at least 5 days. The other symptoms included are:

- severe redness in the eyes
- a rash on the child's stomach, chest, and genitals
- red, dry, cracked lips
- swollen tongue with a white coating and big red bumps
- sore, irritated throat
- swollen palms of the hands and soles of the feet with a purple-red color
- swollen lymph nodes

2nd phase: beginning within two weeks of fever, the skin on the child's hands and feet may begin peeling. The child may also experience joint pain, vomiting, diarrhea or abdominal pain.

3rd phase: recovery time of fading clinical symptoms

Diagnosis: Clinician diagnosis by ruling out other diseases.

CDC defines a child who is diagnosed with KS as a fever lasting 5 or more days and at least 4 of the following symptoms:

- redness in both eyes
- changes around the lips, tongue, or mouth
- changes in the fingers and toes, such as swelling, discoloration, or peeling
- a rash in the trunk or genital area
- a large swollen lymph node in the neck
- red, swollen palms of hands and soles of feet

If Kawasaki disease is suspected, a doctor may order tests to monitor the child's heart function, which can include an echocardiogram, and other tests of heart function

Treatment: Should begin as soon as possible, within 10 days of when the fever first begins. Usually, a child is treated with intravenous **gamma globulin**, purified antibodies from blood ingredients that help to fight infection. The child may also be given a high-dose of aspirin to reduce the risk of heart problems.

Complications: If the illness goes untreated (time period can vary, but likely for 10-14 days and sooner in young infants), it can lead to more serious complications that involve the child's heart and blood vessels.