

Polio

Polio or poliomyelitis is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by poliovirus.

The virus spreads from person to person and can infect a person's spinal cord causing paralysis.

Children younger than 5 years are more likely to get any other group. According to WHO 1 in 200 polio infection will result in permanent paralysis.

Symptoms:-

Two basic patterns of polio infection are described

A minor illness which does not involve CNS

A major illness which involves CNS, which may be paralytic or non-paralytic.

In most people a poliovirus infection is asymptomatic. Minor symptoms which include sore throat and low fever.

CNS involvement develop nonparalytic aseptic meningitis with symptoms of Headache, neck, back, abdominal and extremity pain, fever, vomiting, lethargy and irritability.

Severe symptoms include muscles become weak, floppy and poorly controlled and finally completely paralyzed.

Causes:-

As a highly contagious virus, polio transmits through contact with infected feces.

As, the virus lives in throat and intestine it can transmit through sneeze or cough. Pregnant women, people with weakened immune system and young

children are the most susceptible to the polio virus.

Treatment:-

There is no cure for polio, but there are treatments. The focus of modern treatment has been on providing relief of symptoms, speeding recovery and preventing complications.

Supportive measures include antibiotics to prevent infections in weakened muscles, analgesic for pain, moderate exercises and a nutrient diet.

Treatment of polio often requires long term rehabilitation including occupational therapy, physical therapy, corrective shoes and in some cases orthopedic surgery.

Preventive measures:-

These are the preventive measures:-

- Immunisation is the cornerstone of polio eradication. Two types of vaccine are available an inactivated poliovirus vaccine and live attenuated OPV.

- Sensitive surveillance for acute flaccid paralysis cases or alternatively testing for virus in sewage water along with rapid case investigations and containment of outbreaks are essential for maintaining polio free status in Europe.

- Testing for WPV and VDPV in sewage water is essential surveillance method for poliomyelitic risk.

- Ensure that NGO's, local and international are not restricted in their ability to access vulnerable populations.

- Provide accessible, quality immunisation and health care services.

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