

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Kawasaki disease?

Kawasaki (KAH-WAH-sock-ee) disease is a fever-causing illness of children. The cause of Kawasaki disease is not known.

Who gets Kawasaki disease?

Kawasaki disease occurs mostly in infants and children less than 5 years of age. It is more common in boys than in girls and more common in children of Asian ancestry.

How do people get Kawasaki disease?

It is not known how this disease is spread. Recurrences of the illness have been reported, but they are extremely rare.

What are the symptoms of Kawasaki disease?

The symptoms of Kawasaki disease include a high fever usually lasting for at least 10 days and a rash. The rash is usually limited to the person's trunk. Other symptoms include swollen lymph nodes, red tongue which is described as a "strawberry tongue," red, dry, swollen, and cracked lips, conjunctivitis (redness of the lining of the eyes), and peeling of the skin, especially on the hands and fingers.

Complications of Kawasaki disease include coronary artery aneurysm (ballooning of vessels in the heart). Other organs may be affected. About 1% to 2% of people affected with Kawasaki disease will die of the disease and its complications.

How is Kawasaki disease diagnosed?

There is no specific test for Kawasaki disease. The diagnosis is based on clinical symptoms.

Can people with Kawasaki disease pass the illness to others?

There is no evidence of person-to-person spread.

What is the treatment for Kawasaki disease?

Most people with Kawasaki disease are treated in the hospital with immune globulin. High doses of immune globulin followed by lower doses for two months have been shown to reduce the acute symptoms and reduce the occurrence of later complications. Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent Kawasaki disease.

How can Kawasaki disease be prevented?

At the present time, preventive measures are unknown.

Where can I get more information on Kawasaki disease?

- Your health care provider
- Your local health department
- NJ Department of Health <http://www.nj.gov/health>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov>