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MENINGITIS – CAUSES, SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS, DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT, PREVENTION

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Abstract: Meningitis— infectious etiology, inflammatory processes of the brain and spinal cord. Clinical signs of meningitis include neck stiffness (contraction of the neck muscles, the patient’s head is thrown back and it is difficult for it to return to its normal position), severe headache, body hyperthermia, impaired consciousness, and increased sensitivity to irritants of the voice and lungs of the hands. Meningitis appears as a primary form in response to infection of the membrane or as a secondary form resulting from complications of other diseases. Meningitis is a disease with a high mortality rate, disability of patients, incurable disorders and organ dysfunction.

Key words: Measures for the treatment and prevention of meningitis.

Meningitis is a serious disease accompanied by inflammation of the brain and spinal cord. The shells cover the tissues of the brain and spinal canal.

There are two types of membranes in the human body: soft and hard. Depending on the type of tissue affected by the infection, the localization of the inflammatory process is divided into:

Leptomeningitis, damage to the soft membrane and the most common form;

Pachymeningitis is an inflammation of the dura mater, this type occurs in approximately 2 out of every 100 cases of the disease;

Panmeningitis is diagnosed when both meninges are affected.

Usually, when diagnosing meningitis in the medical sense, it means inflammation of the soft membranes of the brain.

Meningitis is one of the most dangerous diseases of the brain, causing severe complications, causing health problems, permanent disability, and developmental disorders. The mortality rate is high.

Symptoms of meningitis were recorded by Hippocrates and medieval doctors. For a long time, the occurrence of an inflammatory process in the brain led to the death of millions of people.

Before the discovery of antibiotics, the mortality rate from meningitis was 95%. The discovery of penicillin significantly reduced the death rate from disease.

Today, there are modern synthetic drugs for the treatment of meningitis, and to prevent many forms of the disease, vaccines are used against the most common pathogens - pneumococcal, meningococcal and Haemophilus influenzae.

SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS OF MENINGITIS

Meningitis is an infectious disease, and its first symptoms indicate the presence of infection and damage to the nervous system. These symptoms of the disease include:

A sudden increase in body temperature, sometimes to the highest levels;

Strong headache;

Rigidity (tension) of the neck muscles, numbness, difficulty moving the head muscles, bending and turning the head;

Decreased appetite nausea frequent vomiting without relief, diarrhea (mainly in childhood);

Rash of red, pink rashes. The rash disappears temporarily when pressed, after a few hours the color changes to bluish;

General weakness, weakness;

Already in the early stages of the disease, especially with the rapid development of meningitis, confusion, excessive weakness or agitation, and hallucinatory phenomena appear.

DIAGNOSIS OF MENINGITIS

Diagnosis of meningitis begins with a patient examination and history and may include one or more of the following:

- General blood analysis;
- Blood chemistry;
- Laboratory examination of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF);
- PCR analysis;
- Serodiagnosis;
- Magnetic resonance imaging;
- Computed tomography (CT);
- Electroencephalography (EEG);
- Electromyography (EMG).

TREATMENT OF MENINGITIS

Treatment of meningitis should begin if the disease is suspected. In any case, treatment is carried out in the infectious diseases department of the hospital; independent attempts to treat the disease or in a day hospital are not allowed.

The disease can develop rapidly, and symptoms can increase dramatically. Any patient's condition may suddenly deteriorate (eg, increased intracerebral pressure, loss of consciousness, cerebral swelling, difficulty breathing and renal failure, falling into a coma, etc.), therefore emergency assistance is necessary.

The optimal treatment conditions are a separate room in the infectious diseases department of the hospital and round-the-clock supervision by a specialist, creating conditions to reduce sensitization: turning off the lights, eliminating loud sounds, calming the patient.

ETIOTROPIC THERAPY FOR MENINGITIS

Causal therapy is treatment aimed at eliminating the cause of the infection.

Treatment of viral meningitis is based on the use of antiviral drugs (recombinant interferons, endogenous interferon inhibitors, immunomodulators, antiretroviral drugs, etc.), antimeningococcal or antistaphylococcal gamma globulin; treatment of meningitis of fungal etiology is carried out with antimycotic substances.

COMPLICATIONS OF MENINGITIS

Meningitis affects the body, damaging the lining of the brain, and can also leave serious complications. Complications of meningitis include:

- ✓ Hearing loss;
- ✓ Development of epilepsy;
- ✓ Endocarditis;
- ✓ Purulent arthritis;
- ✓ Bleeding disorders;
- ✓ Retarded mental development of the child;
- ✓ Emotional instability, increased excitability, rapid exhaustion of the nervous system;
- ✓ As the disease progresses, young children may develop complications such as hydrocephalus.

Recommendations

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