Press Release

Antibiotic resistance on the rise in children

Paediatricians say children are becoming increasingly powerless to fight off even common ailments like urinary tract infection because of antibiotic abuse.

New Delhi, March 04, 2017: Antibiotic resistance is a growing concern and its impact on patients and communities are known to us all. This is a public health problem, one which is rapidly spreading across the globe, with not enough resources to control it.

A retrospective study by researchers from the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine observed an astounding 700% increase in MDR-GNE infections in a short period of eight years. A 20% increase in the lengths of hospital stay was observed in patients with MDR-GNE infection. The odds for death also increased, though this did not reach statistical significance. More than 75% of the antibiotic-resistant infections were already present at the time of hospitalization, contradicting earlier studies which showed that such infections were most hospital acquired.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. K. K. Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr. RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement said that “Antibiotic resistance has made it harder for us to treat many infections such as typhoid, pneumonia, tuberculosis. Antibiotic resistance prolongs hospitalization, increased cost of treatment and increases risk of death. Several studies have corroborated the adverse impact of antibiotic resistance on health. This study has yet again highlighted the escalating problem of antibiotic resistance. It has shown that antibiotic resistance can affect individuals of any age, even children. More recently, researchers from AIIMS found that nearly 26 per cent of babies with sepsis died, as multi drug resistance made the ailment untreatable.”

“Bacterial infections resistant to multiple antibiotics are especially concerning in children, for whom there are a limited number of stronger antibiotics currently approved for use compared to adults, putting them at higher risk for worse clinical outcomes. Taking cognizance of the impact of antibiotic-resistant infections, IMA has proposed several initiatives to tackle this public health threat - "Jaroorat Bhi Hai Kya", "3A Avoid Antibiotic Abuse campaign", "Use Wisely not Widely", "Think Before you Ink". IMA will also come out with a book on ‘When Not to Use Antibiotics’. We are also concerned about declining research in the field of newer antibiotics and support formulation of a national antibiotic policy.” , added Dr. K.K Aggarwal.
In its first global report on antibiotic resistance, the WHO has warned that “A post-antibiotic era—in which common infections and minor injuries can kill—far from being an apocalyptic fantasy, is instead a very real possibility for the 21st century”. Doctors as well as patients should be aware about and advocate judicious use of antibiotics. Over prescription and self prescription, both, need to be checked.

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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