



July is Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month.

Juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA), also known as juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA), is the most common form of arthritis in children and adolescents.

It is a long-term (chronic) disease resulting in joint pain and swelling.

Causes:

The exact cause is not known. It is thought to be an autoimmune illness. This means the body attacks and destroys healthy body tissue by mistake. In autoimmune diseases, white blood cells can't tell the difference between the body's own healthy cells and infected or damaged cells, or germs like bacteria and viruses.

To effectively manage and minimize the effects of arthritis, an early and accurate diagnosis is essential. By understanding the symptoms and characteristics of each type of JIA, you can help your child maintain an active, productive lifestyle.

Symptoms

Symptoms of JRA may include:

- ✚ Limping or problems using a limb.
- ✚ Rash (on trunk and extremities) that comes and goes with fever.
- ✚ Stiffness, pain, swelling and limited movement in a joint.
- ✚ Generalized symptoms such as pale skin, swollen lymph gland, and "sick" appearance.
- ✚ Uveitis (a type of eye inflammation).
- ✚ Eye pain, which may get worse when looking at light (photophobia).
- ✚ Vision changes.
- ✚ Eye redness
- ✚ Blurred vision.
- ✚ Persistent fever.
- ✚ Weight loss.
- ✚ Fatigue.
- ✚ Irritability.

When to Contact a Medical Professional?

Call your health care provider if:

- ✚ You, or your child, notice symptoms of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis.
- ✚ Symptoms get worse or do not improve with treatment.
- ✚ New symptoms develop.

Coping and support:

Family members can play critical roles in helping a child cope with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. As a parent, you may want to try the following:

- ✂ Treat your child, as much as possible, like other children in your family.
- ✂ If your child gets angry or upset, or feels dejected because of having juvenile arthritis, explain to him or her that the disease isn't caused by anything he or she did.
- ✂ Encourage your child to participate in physical activities, keeping in mind the recommendations of your child's doctor and physical therapist.
- ✂ Discuss your child's condition and the issues surrounding it with teachers and administrators at his or her school.

Reference Links:

- ✂ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juvenile_idiopathic_arthritis
- ✂ <http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/arthritis/jra.html>
- ✂ <http://www.webmd.com/rheumatoid-arthritis/diagnosing-juvenile-arthritis>
- ✂ <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000451.htm>
- ✂ <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/juvenile-rheumatoid-arthritis/basics/coping-support/con-20014378>

For any enquiry or assistance please contact: wellness@medicaretpa.co.in

Disclaimer: No information contained here should be relied on in making health decisions. Always check with your doctor or other health care provider.