



Pediatric Infectious Disease is an Illness

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Introduction

The history of Pediatric Infectious Diseases closely parallels the history of Pediatrics at least until the last century, because historically infections comprised the major causes of childhood morbidity and mortality, as they still do in the developing world. This history reviews developments in the field through the centuries and is written so that it does not overlap the contribution to this series by Baker and Katz entitled 'Childhood Vaccine Development in the United States.' Remarkable descriptions of selected pediatric infections existed long before the invention of printing, and early pediatric texts included many chapters devoted to various infections. The pace of progress regarding infectious diseases of children accelerated during the 18th Century, particularly with respect to prevention of smallpox by inoculation or variolation.

Smallpox was an almost inevitable illness of childhood and was one of the most common causes of death because of its high mortality rate. It was reported, for example, to kill 10% of Swedish children yearly. The opinions of 28 investigators representing all areas of pediatric infectious diseases were sought regarding priorities for research. Seven general areas were most commonly emphasized: new diagnostic methods (especially for viral infections), vaccines (bacterial, respiratory viruses, herpesviruses, and varicellazoster), diarrhea (pathogenesis), National Institutes of Health (NIH)-sponsored studies of antimicrobial agents, NIH-sponsored cooperative studies of uncommon infections, host factors related to susceptibility and resistance and host responses to infection, and studies of bacterial-viral interaction and mechanisms of antimicrobial resistance. Where pediatric and adult medicine interests overlap, collaborative studies would be desirable.

The diseases caused by microorganisms or germs are called infectious diseases. Infectious diseases can be widely spread in children as they have compromised immune system. Infections caused by pneumococcus, rotavirus and pertussis are more common in

children. HIV also transmits from Mother to Child is also one of the infectious disease in children. Pediatric infectious diseases specialists treat a wide range of infectious and immunologic diseases such as those caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. Children are not just small adults. Their bodies are growing and have unique medical needs. They usually express their concerns differently than adults do. They cannot always answer medical questions, and are not always able to be patient and cooperative. Pediatric infectious diseases specialists know how to examine and treat children in a way that makes them relaxed and cooperative.

They also understand the unique signs, symptoms, treatments, and outcomes/prognoses associated with infectious diseases in children, which can be quite different from those of adults with such infections. In 1995, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention granted a Cooperative Agreement Program award to the Infectious Diseases Society of America to develop a provider-based emerging infections sentinel network, the Emerging Infections Network (EIN). Over the past 17 years, the EIN has evolved into a flexible, nationwide network with membership representing a broad cross-section of infectious disease physicians. The EIN has evolved into a flexible network of infectious disease consultants who respond to queries from their colleagues and from members of the public health community about emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) and related phenomena. Pertussis is a chameleon that can present as anything from rhinitis and unspecific mild cough (often not leading to a physician visit or not recognized as pertussis in daily practice) to classic textbook presentation with paroxysmal coughing spells, post-tussive whooping, and vomiting. Any of these cough manifestations can last between a few days to several weeks or even months.

Pertussis is at least unpleasant for the patient, as these symptoms frequently interfere with daily activities and can cause significant sleep disturbances. The Eudowood Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Johns Hopkins treats all aspects of infectious diseases and studies the pathogens, prevention, transmission and therapy of many of diseases, including bacteria, mycobacteria, parasites and viruses. Its faculty are experts on a wide range of infectious agents, from the viruses and bacteria that cause common respiratory tract infections to the more serious illnesses caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). In keeping with his vision that an infectious disease division should embrace many academic fields, former division director Kwang Sik Kim created a monthly infectious disease meeting designed to help scientists from all Johns Hopkins research divisions come together and collaborate on new infectious disease research projects.