

What you need to know about vaccinating your child

DR AHMED A QUAYUM

Every child under 1 year of age is aimed to receive vaccines that protect him/her from vaccine preventable diseases like childhood tuberculosis, whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus, poliomyelitis and measles. In addition, 15 to 49 years aged childbearing women are too eligible to receive 5 doses of tetanus toxoid (TT) vaccine. As per the national policy, all these services are free of cost. The service is a national commitment to reduce child morbidity and mortality rate, which is very high in our country even, in contrast to other SAARC countries. There are other vaccines too which are available at different venues in our country but there are questions about its quality. No vaccine is effective if it is administered before the scheduled date.

As a guardian you must be informed that the vaccination schedule is a prime responsibility of GO/NGO health workers. However, for your convenient, it is cited here: Normally, when your child is 6 weeks old, the 1st dose of DPT and OPV vaccines along with BCG should be administered. Additional two doses of DPT and OPV should be given at

an interval of at least 4 weeks. So, when your child will be 3 and a half months old, s/he should be given 3 doses of DPT and OPV and single dose of BCG. The single dose of BCG vaccine can also be given even just after birth along with an extra dose of OPV. This is commonly practised at most hospitals and clinics. Stepping at the age of 10th month your child is now eligible to receive single dose of measles vaccine along with 4th dose of OPV and 1 lakh IU (International Unit) of Vitamin A.

Within the last couple of years, the government of Bangladesh launched Hepatitis B vaccines for under 1-year children group. The 3 doses of Hep-B vaccines are administered along with 3 doses of DPT having a similar minimum interval of time in between two subsequent doses. At the 1st phase it was launched in 6 districts in 6 divisions, 1 City Corporation and 1 municipality. Within 2005, the whole country would be covered phase-wise. The inclusion of this new vaccine in our national programme is supported by GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccine & Immunisation). This highly expensive and life saving vaccine is free of cost too.

Guardians must be cautioned about common side effects of all these vaccines and they should not

be afraid of the same. These include a mild or low grade fever (remediable by cold sponging), excessive crying when lower limbs are moved and ulcer formation at the left arm where BCG vaccine is administered followed by pus formation and finally permanent scar marking. This scar mark following BCG vaccination ensures the efficacy of the vaccine. You should not be worried about these side effects. Your child will be free from all these within a few days.

Any woman attaining the age of 15 years must receive 1 dose of TT vaccine followed by 2nd dose of the same at least 28 days later. The scheduled 3rd dose should be received at least 6 months later from the date of the 2nd one. The last 2 doses (4th and 5th) must be received with a minimum interval of 1 year from the date of 3rd dose. So, if you want to complete the 5 doses of TT vaccine you need at least 2 years and 7 months. The status of pregnancy does not affect the schedule of this vaccine in any extend.

Remember, these services are free of cost and the nation is committed to provide you quality vaccine through EPI (Expanded Programme on Immunisation). It is your basic right to know what kind of service is available for your children.

Within the last couple of years, the government of Bangladesh launched Hepatitis B vaccines for under 1-year children group



INTERNET PHOTO

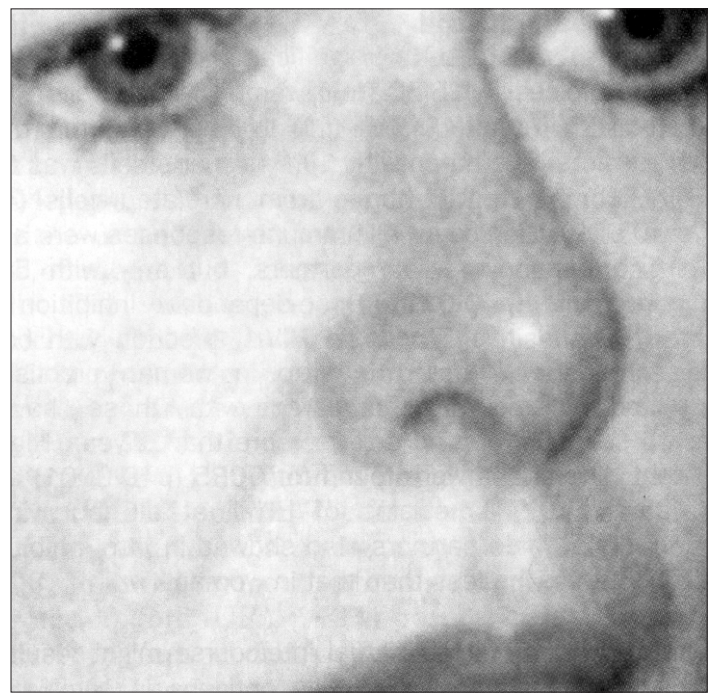
CLINICAL PICTURE

Migraine prodrome: A nose on a face

The migraine prodrome is a constellation of symptoms occurring 24 h before a migraine headache. Premonitory symptoms include food cravings, depression, lethargy, urinary retention and yawning. A dopaminergic mechanism has been suggested. Up to 60 per cent of migraine sufferers have a prodrome, but rarely is it inquired about in the headache history. If a migraine prodrome is identified it presents a unique treatment of opportunity.

The migraine prodrome may not be easy to identify as a nose on the face but it should be sought, since treatment given at the time of the prodrome could prevent the onset of a migraine.

Source: THE LANCET



Dietary fats may alter glaucoma risk

A diet high in n-6 and low in n-3 polyunsaturated fats may offer some protection against developing glaucoma, data from two large studies suggest.

Dr. Jae H. Kang from Harvard University and colleagues examined dietary fat intake in relation to glaucoma in 76,000 women participating in the Nurses' Health Study and 40,000 men in the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study. The participants were free of glaucoma when the studies began in the 1980s, and they were followed for at least 10 years.

According to the team's report in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 474 cases of primary

open-angle glaucoma occurred among the subjects.

The researchers found that there was a "suggestive" association between a higher ratio of n-3 to n-6 polyunsaturated fat and so-called primary open-angle glaucoma, especially for the subtype of the disorder in which pressure inside the eye is elevated.

"Because this is the first examination of this relation, further studies are needed to corroborate these findings," Kang and colleagues conclude.

Source: American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, May 2004.

65,000 blind due to cataract in the country

SURANJIT DEBNATH

Over 750,000 people including 40,000 children are blind in the country due to cataract, malnutrition and lack of public awareness.

Among them 65,000 are blind due to cataract alone which can be cured by providing an intraocular lens through a simple and cost effective surgery, accordingly to the summary Report of The Bangladesh National Blindness and Low Vision Survey.

The Report also said that over 80 percent of them are living in rural areas and over 6 million people need vision correction.

Globally, every 5 seconds one person goes blind while one child goes blind every minute which is four times the world average of a child per minute, according to a study by London International Centre for Eye House (ICEH).

Presently there are 45 million blind people across the globe and 90 percent of them are in the developing countries, while another 135 million suffer from low vision, said the ICEH study. In Bangladesh around

150,000 are surviving irreversible blind due to malnutrition and lack of awareness on prevention and proper treatment of blindness.

Referring to their findings of the first National Epidemiological Study on Childhood Blindness, the ophthalmologists concluded that, among the total blind children in the country 68 percent or seven out of every ten could have been saved by prevention and treatment whereas 32 percent by prevention and 36 percent by treatment.

"There are only 626 ophthalmologists against a minimum requirement of 1400 in the country," said M Jalaluddin Khan, national programme adviser of Vision 2020 co-ordination. Vision 2020 is working to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020.

He also said that among them 350 are practising in the capital and the government health services have only 103 posts for them.

The eye care specialists pointed out that most of the cataract blind children born in village as most of the rural women normally suffer from malnutrition and lack of vitamin

A.

Experts have also suggested that people especially mothers should eat vegetables regularly especially colour vegetables including bean, radish, gourd, pumpkin, arum brinjal, tomato, carrot, lady's finger etc that have full of vitamin A.

A lot of children in the country have also been suffering from malnutrition and lack of vitamin A after birth, said Professor Shah Md Bulbul Islam of National Medical College and Hospital, Dhaka.

"Most of the government district hospitals do not have operation theatre dedicated for eye, male and female ward for eye patients and sufficient equipment and Upazila Health Complexes also lack eye care facilities," Jalaluddin observed.

"Government should take necessary steps immediately to create trained manpower available in every district and midlevel eye care personnel cadre available to assist work of ophthalmologists for proper medical care," Dr M Shahabuddin, Associate Professor of National Institute of Ophthalmology told Star Health.

"Government in collaboration with NGOs should bring out a campaign across the country to create public awareness about their eyes," he also said.

Eye specialist Prof. Dr Deen Mohammad also suggested that government should set up eye department in every thana level hospitals and providing sufficient equipment.

Eye Experts feared that this incident of blindness would double by 2020 if adequate measures are not taken. Meanwhile, World Sight Day (WSD) was globally observed on October 14 with a view to focusing attention on problems of blindness and raising awareness about the problem of avoidable blindness.

The coalition of many international organisations including WHO (World Health Organisation) for VISION 2020: The Right to Sight, are working together on WSD to raise awareness of the global initiative to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020.

This year VISION 2020 has reached its fifth year and collected 20 million signatures from government ministries, key decision makers, eye professionals and the general public around the world.

Find required blood donors on the web

STAR HEALTH DESK

A new website (www.toletdhaka.com) has been launched recently for those who require blood for emergency. Anyone can contact donors for blood by going to the site and contacting the donor either by calling on phone or physically going to his/her resident.

At the site one would find the names and address of the people who are willing to donate blood for patient absolutely free of cost.

There are database regarding the donors and one can easily find his/her required information. There are options to search the donors categorically. There is the provision of being a blood donor at this site.

A new guideline for management of acute coronary syndrome

STAR HEALTH DESK

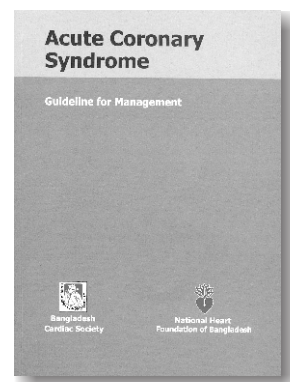
A new guideline for management of acute coronary syndrome (ACS) was launched last week for physicians seeking quick reference on the disease.

Bangladesh Cardiac Society (BCS) in collaboration with the National Heart Foundation published the booklet with support from Aventis Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Bangladesh.

Although there is no specific data on the incidence of ACS at a 19986 estimate showed that every 17 people in one thousand population in the country suffer from ACS and it is now estimated that the figure could be at least five fold indicating coronary heart diseases in the country are on the rise particularly among the younger generation.

The booklet gives a comprehensive guideline highlighting

features on the prevention, clinical assessment of the disease, its diagnosis, management before hospitalisation and identifying risk factors,



discussion on emergency room care, application of drugs and many other important features related to the disease. Professor (retd) Brigadier

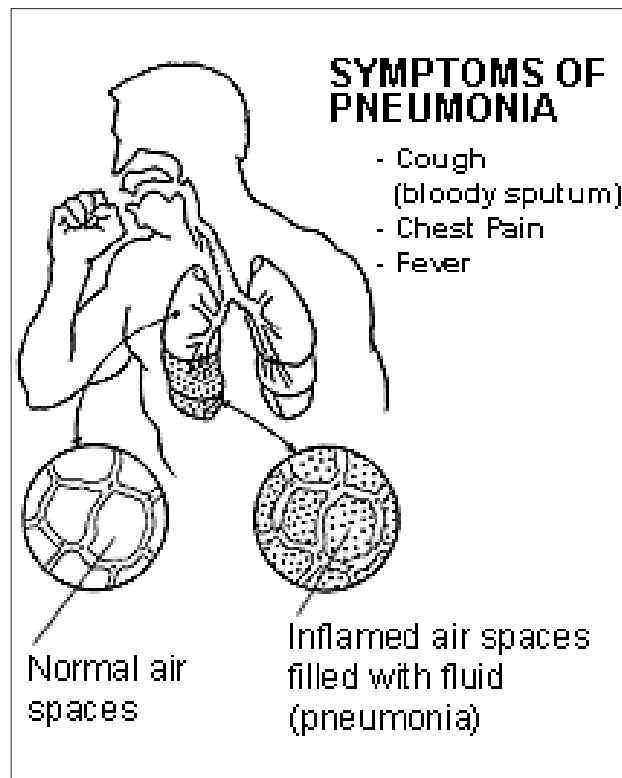
Abdul Malik, President of BCS, Professor A K M Mohibullah, General Secretary of BCS, Professor Nazrul Islam, Director of National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) were present at the launching ceremony of the guide book published by BCS.

Professor M A Hadi, Vice Chancellor of Banghabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) who is also the President of Bangladesh Medical Association was present as the chief guest. Iftekharul Islam, Managing Director of Aventis Pharmaceuticals Ltd who also spoke on the occasion assured continued support for such initiative from Aventis as part of their education grant.

The 38-page booklet is available free of cost for any practicing physicians from either the BCS or National Heart Foundation (NHF) in Mirpur.

HEALTH AND SCIENCE BULLETIN

Sociocultural explanation for delays in careseeking for Pneumonia



While pneumonia is a major cause of death among children in Bangladesh, few children with pneumonia receive timely therapy from trained health providers. Research was conducted to examine how illness beliefs of parents regarding pneumonia guide treatment patterns. Parents commonly described belief theories involving consumption of foods that possess cooling properties or over exposure to cold substances, causing the child to contract what is locally perceived as a "cold" condition. Most parents indicated that their first line of treatment involves the application of home remedies designed to "heat" the body; such an approach likely delays care-seeking outside the household. Care-seeking patterns appear to vary according to age-specific interpretations of the child's condition. Intervention strategies designed to reduce mortality associated with pneumonia need to recognize and address parental beliefs and constraints, which are barriers for seeking prompt and appropriate health care.

Source: ICDDR,B

Seminar on 'World Sight Day 2004' held at SSMC

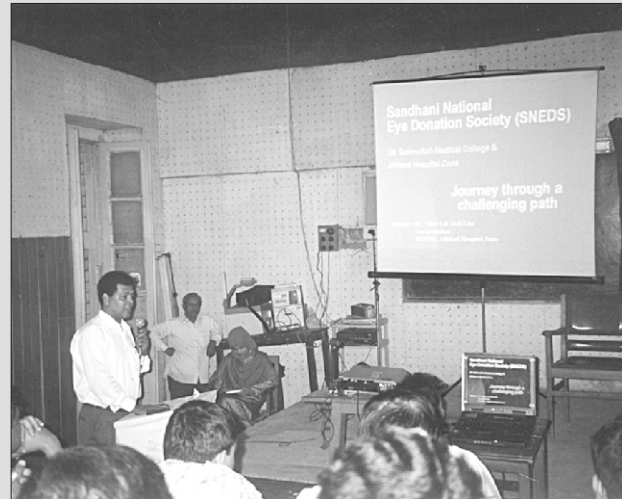
Promotion of posthumous eye donation and prevention of preventable blindness

TAREQ SALAHUDDIN

On the occasion of 'World Sight Day 2004' SNEDS (Sandhani National Eye Donation Society), Mitford Zone organised a seminar on the theme 'Eradication of blindness in Bangladesh and Sandhani' at the lecture gallery no 1 of Sir Salimullah Medical College and Mitford Hospital, Dhaka on 13th October last. Prof. Dr Md Abdul Halim Khan, head of eye department of SSMC and Mitford Hospital was the chairman of the seminar. Dr Moni Lal Aich Litu presented the key presentation of the seminar. He showed different aspects of posthumous eye donation, the current picture of our country, work of SNEDS on posthumous eye donation, cornea collection and so on. Eminent professors talked on the seminar discussing the importance of posthumous eye donation for cornea replacement and prevention of preventable blindness in our country.



Seminar organised by SNEDS (Sandhani National Eye Donation Society), Mitford Hospital Zone on the occasion of 'World Sight Day 2004'



Dr Moni Lal Aich Litu presenting the key paper on the seminar