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Effect of Dengue during Pregnancy

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Abstract

Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne tropical disease caused by the dengue virus. Symptoms typically begin three to fourteen days after infection. This may include a high fever, headache, vomiting, muscle and joint pains, and a characteristic skin rash. Recovery generally takes less than two to seven days. In a small proportion of cases, the disease develops into the life-threatening dengue hemorrhagic fever, resulting in bleeding, low levels of blood platelets and blood plasma leakage, or into dengue shock syndrome, where dangerously low blood pressure occurs. Dengue is spread by several species of mosquito of the Aedes type, A. Aegypti. The virus has five different types: infection with one type usually gives lifelong immunity to that type, but only short-term immunity to the others. Subsequent infection with a different type increases the risk of severe complications. Recovery generally takes less than two to seven days. There are some risk factors to your growing baby due to dengue virus. Keep the surroundings hygienic and clean any stagnant water around your home. Timely measures for safety will ensure that you and your baby are healthy.

Keywords: Dengue, Pregnancy, disease.

1. Introduction

Any form of illness is a reason to worry when you are pregnant. If you happen to catch dengue, then you need to take proper treatment and rest to avoid serious complications.

There can be different levels of severity for dengue. The way you manage your condition and take care of yourself will decide how much damage the virus can cause.

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Dengue is spread by several species of mosquito of the Aedes type, principally A. Aegypti. The virus has five different types: infection with one type usually gives lifelong immunity to that type, but only short-term immunity to the others. Subsequent infection with a different type increases the risk of severe complications. A number of tests are available to confirm the diagnosis including detecting antibodies to the virus or its RNA.

Causes

Dengue is prevalent in tropical regions, as the mosquitoes thrive well in warm and humid climates.

1. These mosquitoes breed in stagnant water. So any open drain, cooler, pots and vases with standing water are potential sites for breeding.
2. There are four strains of the dengue virus. If you are infected by anyone at any time, you are still susceptible to the other three later.

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3. The dengue mosquitoes bite during the daytime, mostly in the early mornings and late afternoons.

Symptoms

When you are affected by dengue, you will observe the following symptoms, which are quite similar to flu:

- High fever and shivers.
- Bleeding from the gums.
- Dehydration and loss of taste for food.
- Severe headache and body pain.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Low platelet count in severe cases.
- Rashes on upper body.

If the platelet count drops, the blood pressure goes low and you may experience bleeding. This condition is known as dengue hemorrhagic fever and can be life threatening.

Risks of Dengue to Your Baby

There are some risk factors to your growing baby due to dengue virus:

- Preterm birth, which hinders the complete growth of your baby.
- Low birth weight.
- In case the fever happens early in pregnancy, it can lead to miscarriage.
- If you happen to catch dengue hemorrhagic fever, it can be fatal for your baby.

On an average, dengue is not known to cause any physical deformity in children. Also, there is no risk of passing the fever to your baby in the fetus. You have to, however, be careful to prevent infection from spreading to the new born. In case you had dengue at the time of delivery, your baby will be checked for symptoms like fever, low platelet count and rashes.

Management

The management and treatment of dengue during pregnancy is quite similar to that for general cases. You will be advised a blood test to test whether you are positive for dengue, and determining the level of infection.

1. To prevent dehydration due to vomiting, drink lots of water and fresh juices. Being hydrated is essential for maintaining embryonic fluid level.
2. Pain killers and antibiotics are given to control fever and joint or muscle ache.
3. Do not take any over the counter medicines, especially aspirin and related drugs, as they may not be safe during pregnancy.
4. Your blood pressure and platelet count will be monitored.
5. Infusion of platelets might be required in extreme cases.
6. If there is excess bleeding, blood transfusion might be needed
7. Administering oxygen and intravenous fluid

Prevention of Dengue

To protect yourself from dengue fever in pregnancy, you must take the following precautions:

- Keep the surroundings hygienic and clean any stagnant water around your home.
- Wear light colored and full sleeved clothes to prevent mosquito bites.
- Use a mosquito repellent that is safe for pregnant women.

- Use mosquito nets at night and spray or coil to ward off mosquitoes.
- Try to stay in a cool room, as these mosquitoes prefer warm environs.

Remember that you are also responsible for protecting your test at the earliest to check whether you have dengue baby from the infection. When you observe the symptoms, go for a blood or not. You may need to go for caesarean section if you have dengue at any time during pregnancy. Taking timely measures for safety will ensure that you and your baby are healthy.

Conclusion

Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne tropical disease caused by the dengue virus. Symptoms typically begin three to fourteen days after infection. This may include a high fever, headache, vomiting, muscle and joint pains, and a characteristic skin rash. Recovery generally takes less than two to seven days. There are some risk factors to your growing baby due to dengue virus. Keep the surroundings hygienic and clean any stagnant water around your home. Timely measures for safety will ensure that you and your baby are healthy.

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