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## **What is Kawasaki syndrome?**

Kawasaki syndrome, also known as Kawasaki disease, is an uncommon illness characterized by a high fever. It most commonly affects children younger than five years of age. The cause of the illness is unknown.

## **Who gets Kawasaki syndrome?**

Young children, particularly under the age of five, are at highest risk of getting Kawasaki syndrome. Boys are more likely than girls to develop Kawasaki syndrome. Worldwide, the illness is most commonly seen in Asia, especially Japan.

## **How is Kawasaki syndrome spread?**

It is unknown how this condition is spread. It does not appear that you can get it from another person, but there have been clusters of illness, which suggests that an infectious or toxic agent might cause it.

## **What are the symptoms of Kawasaki syndrome?**

Kawasaki syndrome is characterized by high fever, rash, swelling of the hands and feet, redness of the whites of the eyes, swollen lymph glands in the neck, irritation and inflammation of the mouth, lips, and throat, and peeling skin on the fingers, palms, and soles of the feet. Serious complications of Kawasaki syndrome include coronary artery abnormalities (heart disease).

## **How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?**

The time it takes for someone to develop symptoms after exposure is unknown.

## **How is Kawasaki syndrome diagnosed?**

A specific test for Kawasaki syndrome is not available. Diagnosis is based on the patient's signs and symptoms and ruling out other potential causes for the illness.

## **What is the treatment for Kawasaki syndrome?**

Once Kawasaki syndrome has been diagnosed, doctors can give specific treatments to help relieve the symptoms. The standard treatment with intravenous immunoglobulin and aspirin substantially decreases the development of heart complications. Treatment works best when it is started early, within 10 days of when the symptoms began. Complete recovery might take several weeks.

## **How can Kawasaki syndrome be prevented?**

Because the specific cause of Kawasaki syndrome is unknown, there is no known way to prevent the illness.

## How can I get more information about Kawasaki syndrome?

- If you have concerns about Kawasaki syndrome, contact your healthcare provider.
- Call your local health department. A directory of local health departments is located at the [VDH Local Health Districts page](#).
- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [the CDC's page on Kawasaki syndrome](#).

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