

Pertussis



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Pertussis The population selected is of infants and children below 10 years of age. The disease selected is whooping cough or Pertussis. Pertussis is a disease in which the patient experiences long coughing sessions generally continued over six weeks. Pertussis is a disease caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis*. As the patient inhales the air after the cough, it sounds like a whoop which is why the disease is called as whooping cough. The main way of preventing Pertussis is vaccination, though certain antibiotics may also be prescribed to the patient to reduce the severity of cough as well as its duration.

Since the disease is contagious, it mainly spreads through air pollution. As the immunity system of the infants and children below 10 years of age is not as strong as that of the adults, the vulnerability of the former to the disease is more as compared to the latter. Besides, children and particularly infants are much less careful about the quality of food they eat, and need strict parental supervision and guidance to eat hygienic food. As infants crawl, their hands come in contact with the floor which is one of the ways they acquire the bacterial infection. In addition to that, infants tend to pick up anything they find lying on the floor and put it in the mouth. It is not out of the ordinary for an infant to pick up a contaminated thing like the left-over seed of a fruit lying on the floor, and take it to the mouth. Children play out-door very carelessly. They frequently fall on the ground while running and playing, and get their hands and bodies stacked with mud. " Family members are responsible for more than three quarters of pertussis cases transmitted to infants, according to a new report" (One India News, 2007). Children's lack of concern about the health and safety of the way they live and the food they eat are the prime factors that increase their vulnerability to Pertussis.

There are certain cultures in which children are provided with more care and supervision as compared to other cultures. Factors that play a role in this include but are not limited to the general awareness about healthy living in the people, education of the parents, the economic strength of the country, and the level of cleanliness generally maintained in the homes and outdoors. Generally, advanced countries provide the children with an environment that is healthier and safer as compared to the environment children get in the underdeveloped and developing countries. The population of infants and children selected from the study is from the USA. As people have become more educated and concerned about maintaining an organic, green, and healthy lifestyle, there is increased tendency among the parents to take good care of their children. Timely vaccination and increased parental supervision is the key to preventing the child from getting Pertussis.

The ethical consideration that must be accounted for when working with infants and children is that the children must not be asked difficult questions, and should not be made to answer when they don't feel like answering. The legal consideration that applies is the involvement of parental consent in the study of the child's behavior and disease.

References:

One India News. (2007, May 2). Infants acquire pertussis from family members. Retrieved from <http://news.oneindia.in/2007/05/02/infants-acquire-pertussis-from-family-members-1178090000.html>.