

Community Acquired Pneumonia In Children- Contemporary Issues And Current Concerns

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Abstract

Community acquired pneumonia (CAP) remains the leading cause of mortality in children less than five years of age. This article reviews the main issues related to CAP in children namely recognition of seriousness, need for standardized case management, use of appropriate antibiotic therapy, predictors of treatment failure, role of chest radiography and prevention of CAP. Early recognition and use of appropriate effective antibiotic therapy can significantly reduce mortality of childhood pneumonia. Education of primary care-givers in the community especially parents and community health workers is an important and much needed measure to help achieve the above. Effectiveness of standardized case management can be further improved by addressing the various risk factors associated with poor response to antibiotic therapy namely malnutrition, incomplete immunizations and hypoxemia at presentation since these are amenable to interventions. Primary prevention of pneumonia through appropriate vaccination policies is likely to reduce the burden significantly.

Key Words: Community acquired pneumonia, children, prevention, recognition, standardized case management, immunization