

STATETIMES

SUNDAY

Your Companion for a Funday

 PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19

Coronavirus: Is a headache without a fever a COVID-19 symptom?

Headaches and fevers are two of the most reported symptoms of COVID-19. Some people develop both, but many people develop one of these symptoms without the other. Researchers at the Hospital Universitario de La Princesa in Madrid, Spain, found that patients with COVID-19 who developed headaches as an early symptom of infection had a milder illness and less risk of death.

Headaches are also one of the most reported long-haul COVID-19 symptoms. Although less common, some people also develop long-haul fevers. It is possible to develop a headache with or without a fever.

Studies have found that anywhere from 10 to 70 percent of people with COVID-19 develop headaches. About 25 percent of people experience migraine episodes, while 75 percent experience tension headaches. In an April 2021 review of studies, researchers found that among 17,515 people with COVID-19, 79.43 percent of people developed fevers. Early data shows that headaches are one of the five most reported symptoms of the Omicron variant.

Connection between headaches and fevers

A study published in The Journal of Headache and Pain found that headaches in a group of 576 people with COVID-19 were associated with fever, being female, body aches and loss of smell. On the contrary, a December 2020 study found no connection between headaches and fevers among 112 healthcare professionals infected with COVID-19.

Are headaches a symptom of long-COVID?

Headaches with or without a fever can be a long-haul symptom of COVID-19. As per experts, headaches in the case of Omicron can be the body's inflammatory reaction as it fights off the virus. Headaches caused due to the Omicron variant also lasts for three days, even if you take painkillers regularly. More people seem to develop headaches as a long-haul symptom than fevers.

In an August 2021 review, researchers identified 55 long-term symptoms of COVID-19. They defined a long-term symptom as one persisting between 14 to 110 days after infection. Among the people in the 15 studies included in the review, more than 80 percent developed at least one long-term symptom, the most common being: fatigue (58 percent); headache (44 percent); poor concentration (27 percent); hair loss (25 percent); and shortness of breath (24 percent). Intermittent fever was reported in 11 percent of people.

When to see a doctor for headache

If you suspect you have COVID-19, it's important to isolate yourself from others. Most cases of COVID-19 can be treated at home with plenty of rest, but it's important to seek immediate medical attention if you develop emergency symptoms, such as trouble breathing or chest pain. Doctors advise to seek immediate attention if your headache is paired with slurred speech or blurry vision.



10 ways you can improve your child's listening skills

As a child grows it undergoes innumerable behavioral changes which need parental guidance in order to be directed in the right course. Parental interventions during the growing years of a child shapes the mannerism, communication and social etiquettes in a child.

During the initial stage when a child is not aware of the sense of right and wrong, it will do what seems easy for it. Be it running around and making noise without a reason or pulling and throwing things at others or even hitting or punching other kids without any reason, kids tend to do and repeat the activities which they like doing. This poses a great challenge for parents.

When a child does not listen, it is obvious for the parents to get angry but what actually the situation demands is to be gentle and kind to the child and make them understand what proper mannerism is.

Listening skills in a child

In an ideal situation a child should sit down and listen to what others say, focus on it and then act on it. However, in real life, parents go through a lot to make their child listen to them. Biologically, a child's listening skills develop after the proprioception and vestibular sense develop in it. This development usually occurs before the age of six. While proprioception is the body's ability to sense movement, action and location, vestibular sense guides our movement and balance sense.

Socially, a child's listening skills relies upon the ambience of the family and the vibes of the family members it grows up amidst.

Why doesn't a child listen?

There are several factors behind this, most of which centre around parental understanding. Parents are too busy becoming parents that they forget that they are dealing with a child who does not have any understanding of worldly affairs.

The manner of parenting that is conditioned into the minds of new-parents restricts them from being soft and kind towards the child.

Old school parenting mostly emphasizes on being strict and harsh to the kids; this they think helps the child understand the difference between right and wrong.

What to do when your child does not listen?

When your child is throwing tantrums without paying attention to you, here are few things you need to do:

1. Go to your child and get down to their level: When your child does not listen to you and keeps on doing mischief, just go to them and get down to their level. You



can either squat or sit down with the child and talk to them. Being at equal height helps interaction. This way the child will easily communicate with you.

2. Make eye contact: When talking to the child, make eye contact. It is very effective. Bringing the child to eye contact tells that you have got the attention of the child. It also instills a sense of security, respect and faith. So whatever you say, sitting down and making eye contact will definitely have an effect on your child.

3. Do not lose your temper: Until you have centered the child's attention to yourself, do not lose your temper. Keep calm and talk to the child. Once you lose the temper the child may either get irritated or else may get scared and move away from you.

4. Bring in humor: Humor can brighten up any situation. If you feel your child is tense or is about to cry during the face to face interaction, lighten up the moment with a joke.

5. Teach the child about communication skills: When you are with the child teach about respectable communication skills and those which are loathed by people. Explain the child with examples of incidents where it has shown respectable behaviours and where it did not.

6. Keep it a short interaction: Remember, you are dealing with a toddler not a college going kid! A toddler's attention span is quite limited. The short and simple the interaction is, the better the toddler understands it.

7. Appreciate: When you are talking to a toddler about bad mannerisms, counter it with examples of good mannerism and appreciate the kid for wherever it has shown good manners. In that way the child understands the concept of right and wrong in a better way.

8. Use gestures: There are certain manners which are gesture specific, for example making silly faces. While you are discussing this with the child, make use of the particular bad gesture and tell the child not to do it again.

9. Get the child's opinion: Do not simply make it one-person interaction. Allow your child to speak. Listen to what the child says. If the child does not speak, ask them questions. This will clear many questions like if your child has understood whatever you told it and if its mannerism is a retaliation of some sort of odd behaviour it sees or is subjected to within the family.

10. Be childlike: Children love fun. Try childlike techniques like singing, playing, whispering into ears. This fun way will accept your teachings actively.

Signs of dementia: Know them for timely medical intervention

Dementia is described as the deterioration in cognitive function. This is different from the normal declination of cognitive health which is the consequence of biological ageing. While dementia is mostly seen in older people, it is not an old age related issue. As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), dementia is the seventh leading cause of death among older people globally.

"Currently more than 55 million people live with dementia worldwide, and there are nearly 10 million new cases every year," a 2021 WHO report said. "Dementia results from a variety of diseases and injuries that primarily or secondarily affect the brain. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and may contribute to 60-70% of cases," the report adds.

Dementia gradually grows in an individual. One does not get dementia all of a sudden; instead there are several signs of dementia which show in an individual and these signs worsen in course of time.

Detection of dementia signs at an early stage would help the person get medical assistance before the condition worsens. It would also give the person ample time to make changes in the lifestyle so that the risk of dementia is averted further. Indulgence in brain healthy behaviour will help the person improve their cognitive health.

What are the early signs of dementia?

"The most common sign is a memory problem, and it's usually episodic, meaning that it's hard to remember events in your life, past and present," says Dr. David Caplan, a professor of neurology at Harvard Medical School.

While many experts associate decline in memory with dementia, there are several other signs also which can indicate the onset of dementia.

Memory problem

A decline in memory capacity is what has been said by experts the main sign of dementia onset. When people experience a gap in recent or past memories they should be alert about it and focus on improving it.

Do not ignore a memory lapse. If it is occurring in frequent episodes then make sure



to take help from experts.

Inability to take a decision

The confusion associated with dementia makes it difficult for the individual to plan anything or to take a decision on anything. This increased confusion affects the normal functioning of an individual for which he or she starts relying on others.

Behaviour changes

Due to forgetfulness and lack of concentration, a typical behaviour change is noticed in these individuals. These people would seem withdrawn and depressed most of the time.

Research studies have established the association between sudden neuropsychiatric symptoms — such as anxiety, apathy, irritability, and restlessness and progression of dementia.

Depression

Depression and diseases related to declination of cognitive health go hand in hand. As per a study published in the Archives of General Psychiatry people who were depressed late in life had a 70% increased risk of dementia, and those who had been depressed since middle age were at 80% greater risk.

There are various signs of depression like feeling lonely, lack of enthusiasm, irritability, loss of interest, confusion, trouble sleeping, changes in appetite and pessimism.

What are the other signs of dementia?

Dementia is also characterized by other signs like: forgetfulness, losing track of the time, becoming lost in familiar places, becoming forgetful of recent events and people's names, becoming confused while at home, having increasing difficulty with communication, needing help with personal care, experiencing behaviour changes, including wandering and repeated questioning.

When the condition has already progressed and has worsened, signs like becoming unaware of the time and place, having difficulty recognizing relatives and friends, having an increasing need for assisted self-care, having difficulty walking and experiencing behaviour changes that may escalate and include aggression.

The WHO has listed the above symptoms of dementia and calls for immediate action. "As the proportion of older people in the population is increasing in nearly every country, this number is expected to rise to 78 million in 2030 and 139 million in 2050," it warns.

