



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

CHAGAS DISEASE

Mrs. Ariya .S. Kurup, (Assistant professor), Sree Balaji College Of Nursing,
Affiliated By Bharat University, N0: 7 Works Road, Chrompet, Chennai, Tamilnadu

ABSTRACT- *Chagas disease is an inflammatory, infectious disease caused by a parasite found in the feces of the triatomine bug. Chagas disease can infect anyone, but is diagnosed most often in children. Left untreated, Chagas disease later can cause serious heart and digestive problems. Treatment of Chagas disease focuses on killing the parasite in acute infection and managing signs and symptoms in later stages.*

KEY WORDS- Disease, Inflammatory, Disease, Acute Phase, Chronic Phase

ETIOLOGY- The cause of Chagas disease is the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*, which is transmitted to humans from a bite from an insect known as the triatomine bug.

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

Chagas disease can cause a sudden, brief illness (acute), or it may be a long-lasting (chronic) condition. The acute phase of Chagas disease, which lasts for weeks or months, is often symptom-free. Signs and symptoms of the chronic phase of Chagas disease may occur 10 to 20 years after initial infection, or they may never occur

ACUTE PHASE	CHRONIC PHASE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Fatigue • Rash • Body aches • Eyelid swelling • Headache • Loss of appetite • Nausea, diarrhea or vomiting • Swollen glands • Enlargement of your liver or spleen • Swelling at the infection site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irregular heartbeat • Congestive heart failure • Sudden cardiac arrest • Difficulty swallowing due to enlarged esophagus • Abdominal pain or constipation due to enlarged colon

RISK FACTORS

- Living in impoverished rural areas of
- Living in a residence that contains triatomine bugs
- Receiving a blood transfusion or organ transplant from a person who carries the infection

COMPLICATIONS

- **Heart failure.** Heart failure occurs when your heart becomes so weak or stiff that it can't pump enough blood to meet your body's needs.
- **Enlargement of the esophagus (megaesophagus).** This rare condition is caused by the abnormal widening (dilation) of the esophagus, which can result in difficulty with swallowing and digestion.
- **Enlargement of the colon (megacolon).** Megacolon occurs when your colon becomes abnormally dilated, causing abdominal pain, distension and severe constipation.

TESTS AND DIAGNOSIS

1. physical examination
2. blood tests - confirm the presence of the T. cruzi parasite

If the disease has entered the chronic phase. These tests may include:

1. **Electrocardiogram**, a procedure that records the electrical activity of your heart
2. **Chest X-ray**, which lets your doctor see if your heart is enlarged
3. **Echocardiogram**, a test that uses sound waves to capture moving images of your heart, allowing your doctor to see any changes to the heart or its function
4. **Abdominal X-ray**, a procedure that uses radiation to capture images of your stomach, intestines and colon
5. **Upper endoscopy**, a procedure in which you swallow a thin, lighted tube (endoscope) that transmits images of your esophagus onto a screen

TREATMENT

1. Aim of the Treatment for Chagas disease focuses on killing the parasite and managing signs and symptoms.
2. acute phase of Chagas disease medicine benznidazole and nifurtimox may be of benefit
3. Once Chagas disease reaches the chronic phase, medications won't cure the disease. But, the drugs help slow the progression of the disease and its most serious complications.
4. Additional treatment depends on the specific signs and symptoms:

PREVENTION

- **Avoid sleeping in a mud, thatch or adobe house.** These types of residences are more likely to harbor triatomine bugs.
- **Use insecticide-soaked netting over your bed** when sleeping in thatch, mud or adobe houses.
- **Use insecticides** to remove insects from your residence.
- **Use insect repellent** on exposed skin.

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