



“First of all, a child becomes greedy because of not getting enough. I would help my greedy child by giving him more than enough. He should feel that there is no reason to worry about anything.”

ABDUL KIWEWA, BUILDER



“It is rare to find a greedy child. They usually have a high appetite for one particular thing, for instance, beef, fish or drinks. I would help them by finding out what they love the most and give it to them in plenty.”

PETER MWEBAZE, BUILDER



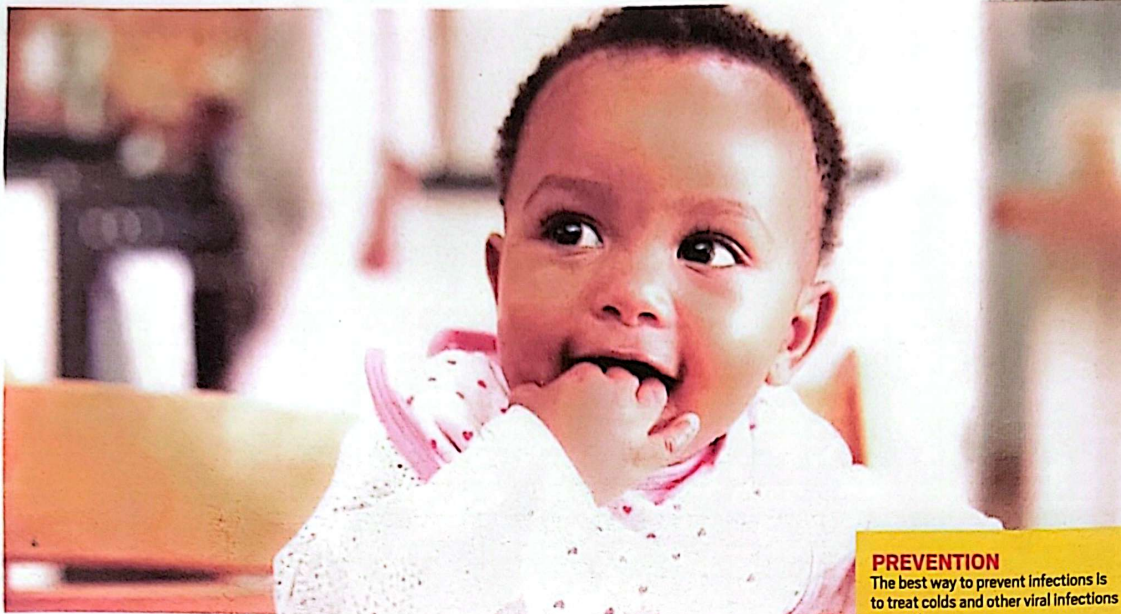
“I once had a greedy child. It took me long to understand why he was greedy. I found out that he used to be given very little food while I was away and so would want to eat more [enough] in my presence. I chose to always serve him enough and he is okay now.”

ZULAIKA ALI, BUSINESSWOMAN



“Some children are greedy because of the environment they live in. For example, in an extended family, so children are likely to become greedy if there are cases of insufficient basic needs such as food. Such children can be helped by studying the status of the family.”

CULTON NAKAMATE, ADMINISTRATOR



Tell-tale signs of ear infection in babies

EAR HEALTH. When you are likely to need an ear nose and throat specialist. **CAROLYNE B. ATANGAZA** explores.

Nothing is as frustrating as a baby crying in obvious pain that they cannot communicate to you. Beatrice Gonahasa recollects her experiences with ear infections as scary and shocking.

“I never had ear infections with my first born and that is why I felt frustrated when my daughter got one almost every three months,” says Gonahasa. She reveals that she was so scared by the first infection that she made her husband drive them to hospital at 2am.

“My baby had had a

questionably high temperature before bed so I kept monitoring. She was so restless that I was forced to examine her from head to toe, but I did not get beyond the ears. I looked in there and saw something that scared me,” the mother of two narrates.

Dr Edward Mugisha from Keserena Children's Hospital, Bukoto says ear infections are one of the leading paediatric ailments and every parent will have to deal with them at least once by the time the baby is one year old.

What it is

An ear infection is an inflammation of the middle ear, usually caused by a virus that occurs when fluid builds up behind the eardrum. This is why infections mostly occur during colds, sinus infections, even

allergies because the fluid gets trapped in the middle ear.

Possible causes

Doctor Joseph Opio, at the same hospital, further explains that babies are susceptible to ear infections mainly because their immune system is still developing and their Eustachian tubes that drains normal fluid from the middle ear to the back of the throat are not yet fully developed.

“When a child gets a cold and the tubes swell, they can prevent fluid from draining. This fluid can get trapped behind the eardrum and create an ideal moist environment for viruses or bacteria in a child's throat and ears to multiply and cause an infection,” says Dr Opio.

Another major cause of ear

infections according to Dr Mugisha is due to the underdeveloped immunity which leaves babies prone to infection from viruses or bacteria when they are around infected people. “When people cough, sneeze, laugh, or talk, they can spread the viruses or bacteria that cause colds and respiratory illnesses from hands, and into

Tell-tale signs of an ear infection

There are three main types of ear infections that affect children. One is otitis media which is an infection of the middle ear, right behind the ear drum. It usually occurs when the baby's cold introduces bacteria into the ear through the Eustachian tube.

The other one is acute otitis media which happens when the tube in the inside of the ear is clogged with mucus and fluid, leading to infection and swelling.

Then, swimmer's ear which is an infection of the outer ear and ear canal due to bacteria growing in a wet, dark environment.

“Of the three, otitis media is the most dangerous because it can easily pour into the neck affecting nerves that consequently leads to complications such as facial palsy,” explains Dr Mugisha. “It is therefore important never to leave colds untreated in babies however mild they seem,” he cautions.

Symptoms

“The symptoms might include crying, ear tugging, oral sores, failure to eat, body responses like diarrhoea and fever” doctor Mugisha says. A baby with an ear infection will also have disturbed sleep, low energy levels and sometimes pus will burst through the eardrum.

Treatment

Dr Opio says most infections clear up on their own but when the problem persists, antibiotics are prescribed.

“When you take the baby to the doctor, they might give you Ibuprofen to relieve pain caused by the infection and send you back home for a period of “watchful-waiting”. If the baby has not improved in 48 hours do not hesitate to go back to the hospital because the problem might have worsened,” Dr Opio advises.

Be vigilant to keep your youngster safe from ear infections.

PREVENTION

The best way to prevent infections is to treat colds and other viral infections promptly.

Maintain good hygiene to reduce the spread of germs. Wash your hands and your baby's hands often and always after using the toilet, changing diapers, and before eating or preparing food.

Be vigilant to prevent babies from introducing foreign objects into their ears.

“I highly recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months because breast milk contains immune-building antibodies which mothers transfer to their babies that help boost the babies' immunity,” Dr Edward Mugisha says.

Keep your baby's vaccinations current. Immunisations help prevent certain illnesses that can lead to an ear infection. For example, the Hib vaccine has helped tremendously in reducing the number of ear infections in babies, and the pneumococcal vaccine in prevention..