



# BACKDOOR READING FROM YOUR PARISH NURSE

## REYES SYNDROME

### Because You Need To know

Reye's Syndrome is a frightening, swift-acting disease that most often strikes children and adolescents recovering from viral illnesses. No one is immune. The symptoms are unfamiliar to many people which is why we have misdiagnosis and death or brain damage to its victims.

Epidemiologic research has shown an association between the development of Reye's Syndrome and the use of

aspirin or aspirin containing medications for treating the symptoms of influenza-like illnesses, chicken pox and colds. The FDA recommends that aspirin and combination products containing aspirin (salicylates) not be given to children under 18 years of age during episodes of these illnesses.

Early diagnosis is vitally important if treatment is to be successful. Reye's Syndrome usually

appears soon after a viral illness or upper respiratory infection, such as chicken pox or the common cold. The first signs of Reye's are usually continuous or relentless vomiting. A person may become irritable and negative, wanting to be left alone. They may become confused and unable to carry out simple tasks. As the disease progresses, the person experiences aggression and combativeness.

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Special points of interest:



Points of Interest:

- Effects all organs esp. liver & brain
- Appears in Jan, Feb and March mostly
- Generally happens when the person is recovering from viral illness
- Unless diagnosed quickly, and treated successfully, death is common, often within a few days.

## Reye's Syndrome Symptoms

### Stage I

- Persistent vomiting
- Signs of brain dysfunction (listlessness, loss of pep & energy, drowsiness)

### Stage II, III, & IV

- Personality changes (irritability, aggressive behavior, combative)
- Delirium, convulsions, coma.

**Medications can mask symptoms. Do not give your child aspirin or anti-nausea medications.**

**And its not just aspirin. See me for a list of other products.**