



Two important problems in terms of child health: pertussis and obesity

Çocuk sağlığı açısından iki önemli sorun: boğmaca ve obezite

Müjgan Alikasıfoğlu

Altunizade Acıbadem Hospital, İstanbul, Turkey

The March 2020 issue of our journal contains two important articles related to pertussis and obesity.

The most striking outcome of the research article in which patients who were diagnosed as having pertussis and were admitted to an intensive care unit over a 2-year time period and evaluated retrospectively, was the finding that 94.4% of 18 patients were aged below 2 months. This finding is very important in terms of showing us the importance of vaccinating mothers and the cocoon strategy once again.

In a research study conducted in Istanbul in 2016 with 318 adults, 36.7% of the individuals included in the study reported that they were aware of the Tdap vaccine, but were not vaccinated, and 61.3% reported that they were not aware of the vaccine (1). As a result of this finding and the outcome of the research article published in our journal, I wish to emphasize that primary care physicians, pediatricians, and gynecologists have a great role in terms of increasing the awareness of adult vaccines, vaccinating mothers against pertussis, and accomplishing the cocoon strategy, which consists of vaccinating all adults who have close contact with babies aged younger than one year and have not been vaccinated against pertussis in the past.

Obesity is considered a public health problem that started to ring alarm bells with the World Health Organization (WHO) in the 1990s, principally described as a “social and environmental disease (2).”

The WHO associates the increase in childhood obesity with changes in children’s behaviors and with changes

in society including social and economic developments; policies in the area of agriculture, transportation, and urban planning; the processing, distribution, and marketing of foods; and naturally with education. In the fight against obesity, the WHO supports the conduction of studies related to the detection and improvement of the political, cultural, and physical factors involved in the creation of an obesogenic environment (2).

The review article included in our journal emphasizes the importance of exercise in the fight against childhood obesity. It focuses on exercise treatment in detail, and also emphasizes the ways to increase compliance with a nutrition and activity program appropriate for the child’s age, family characteristics and physical environment, namely the child’s daily life. In this context, it is directive in the issue of how physicians can manage their patients with obesity who they encounter with a gradually increasing frequency in daily practice. With reference to this review article, I wish to emphasize that pediatricians, as advocate of children’s rights in the fight against obesity, should also raise awareness with community-based studies so that children can live in healthy environments and have easier access to healthy foods.

References

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Cite this article as: Alikasıfoğlu M. Two important problems in terms of child health: pertussis and obesity. *Turk Pediatri Ars* 2020; 55(1): 1.

Corresponding Author/Sorumlu Yazar: Müjgan Alikasıfoğlu E-mail/E-posta: drkasif.m@gmail.com

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DOI: 10.14744/TurkPediatriArs.2020.59219

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