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18/mhs02/095

PHS 212

Nursing, 200L

30th June, 2020

Diseases of the renal system

1. Obstruction;

While it is possible for the urinary tract to be obstructed by a large mass (tumor, stone, or foreign body) lying in the bladder, the tubular portions of the tract (urethra and ureters) are much more vulnerable to obstruction. The urethra may be obstructed by stones (calculi) formed in the bladder or kidneys; by fibrous contraction of the urethral wall (urethral stricture); and by congenital valve or diaphragm (membranous malformation). Although not a part of the excretory tract, the prostate lies close to the bladder neck, and in older men it is an important cause of obstruction; fibrous disease of the bladder neck can also cause obstruction. The ureters can likewise be obstructed by calculi and stricture (narrowing); by fibrosis; scarring of surrounding tissue (retroperitoneal fibrosis); and by tumour, though this is more likely to cause blood in the urine (hematuria).

1. Infection of urinary tract;

Infection of the urinary tract is a common and important cause of both minor and major illness. At one extreme, an attack of cystitis—inflammation of the bladder—may cause only trivial discomfort; on the other hand, infection once established may cause lifelong discomfort, may be largely unresponsive to treatment, and may greatly shorten life itself. Infection may be with a great variety of organisms, but the most common are those that normally inhabit the bowel, where they are relatively harmless, becoming a cause of disease only when they enter vulnerable tissue. Because of the short female urethra, urinary infections are more common in women than in men and occur especially during pregnancies, when there may be partial stagnation of the urine from pressure on the urinary tract. In later life, as prostatic disease becomes more common, urinary infection becomes more of a problem in men. Another vulnerable period is infancy, when the use of diapers probably facilitates entry of organisms into the urethra. The introduction of a catheter into the bladder may be necessary to relieve urethral obstruction, but since the procedure always carries a risk of introducing infection, it is not lightly undertaken.

 In all forms of urinary infection the urine may be cloudy and may contain more ammonia than usual. Urination tends to be painful if the urethra is inflamed, and both painful and frequent if inflammation involves the bladder. Bladder infection may also cause fever, dull pain in the lower part of the abdomen, and vomiting. If the infection reaches the kidneys, symptoms are even more severe, and there is pain in the loins, on one or both sides, and sometimes high fever.

1. Urinary Incontinence Is the Loss of Bladder Control;

Most bladder control issues arise when the sphincter muscles of the urethra are too weak or too active. If the sphincter muscles are too weak, a cough or sneeze can cause urination. Sphincter muscles that are too active can trigger a sudden, strong urge to urinate with little urine in the bladder. These issues are diagnosed as urinary incontinence (UI). Women experience UI twice as often as men. It becomes more common with age.

1. Kidney Stones Form from Substances in Urine;

The kidneys produce urine to eliminate waste. Kidney stones can form when mineral and acid salts in the urine crystallize and stick together. If the stone is small, it can pass easily through the urinary system and out of the body. A larger stone can get stuck in the urinary tract, however. A stuck kidney stone causes pain and can block the flow of urine.