Streptococcal throat infection linked to mental disorders

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Individuals with streptococcal throat infection have increased risks of mental disorders, especially obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and tics, according to a study published online May 24 in *JAMA Psychiatry*.

Sonja Orlovska, M.D., from the University of Copenhagen in Denmark, and colleagues conducted a population-based cohort study with up to 17 years of follow-up to examine the risk of mental disorders after a streptococcal throat infection. Data were included for 1,067,743 children, of whom 638,265 received a streptococcal test, including 349,982 who had one or more positive test results.

The researchers found that the risk of any mental disorder was increased for individuals with a positive streptococcal test compared to those without a streptococcal test (incidence rate ratio [IRR], 1.18), especially for OCD and tic disorders (IRR, 1.51 and 1.35, respectively). There was a further increase in the risk of any mental disorder and OCD after a streptococcal throat infection versus a non-streptococcal throat infection. The risk of any mental disorder, OCD, and tic disorders was also increased among individuals with a non-streptococcal throat infection (IRRs, 1.08, 1.28, and 1.25, respectively).

"Non-streptococcal throat infection was also associated with increased risks, although less than streptococcal infections for OCD and any mental disorder, which could also support important elements of the diagnostic concept of pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome," the authors write.

More information: Abstract/Full Text (subscription may be required)

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