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DO WE NEED SPECIALIZED CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

Specialized Children's hospitals offer their services exclusively for children and adolescents; typically serve children from birth up to the age of 18 years. Children's hospitals are characterized by greater attention to the medical as well as psychosocial support of children and their families. Early childhood, when early programming occurs, and adolescences are critical periods of human's life with many changes happening and happening fast; such changes can shape the adulthood health in an irreversible way.

Children's hospitals are staffed by professionals (pediatricians, nurses, therapists, pharmacists, technicians and other staff) who are trained in treating children. The advances in medical and surgical care resulted in improved survival. To reach such a goal some children have to spend relatively long periods in hospital, having access to teaching staff and play staff is an important part of their care.

Certain diseases happen only in children, some diseases have different presentation and course in children. Diagnostic tests and treatments are different, too. Normal lab ranges are different; laboratory has to get used to smaller sample size and still maintaining high accuracy. For example the pediatric radiologist has to be comfortable reading images of growing organs of children at different ages; growth plates can easily be mistaken for fractures by the untrained eye! Moreover, limiting radiation exposure and yet maintaining high diagnostic accuracy can be a big challenge. Medication dosages are based on weight. Judicious use of pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches is essential for successful care, for example a parent holding a child during an uncomfortable procedure can be better than any amount of sedation!

Pediatric trained health care professionals are "family focused" while in adult medicine the care is patient focused. More importantly; several researches have proven that the outcome is better in children's hospital versus general hospitals.

Biography

Mohamad Miqdady is the Chief of Ped. GI, Hepatology & Nutrition Division at Sheikh Khalifa Medical City in UAE and an Adjunct Staff at Cleveland Clinic, Ohio USA. He is American Board certified in Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition. He completed his Fellowship in Pediatric Gastroenterology at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, TX, USA. He held the position of Assistant Professor at Jordan University of Science and Technology in Jordan for six years prior to joining SKMC. Main research interests include feeding difficulties, functional GI disorders, probiotics, picky eating, obesity, procedural sedation, allergic GI disorders and celiac disease. He has authored several publications and book chapters including www.uptodate.com. On the Editorial Board of few journals including Gastroenterology & Hepatology.

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