

nutrition and hydration, with observation and management as for other cerebral disorders. Viral encephalitis can cause devastating neurologic injury. Follow-up care with periodic reevaluation and rehabilitation is important for patients who develop residual effects of the disease.

The prognosis for the child with encephalitis depends on the child's age, the type of organism, and residual neurologic damage. Very young children (younger than 2 years old) may exhibit increased neurologic disabilities, including learning difficulties and epilepsy. Follow-up care with periodic reevaluation is important because symptoms are often subtle, and rehabilitation is essential for patients who develop residual effects of the disease.

Quality Patient Outcomes: Encephalitis

- Early recognition of signs and symptoms of meningitis
- Cerebral edema prevented
- Side effects managed
- Neurologic sequelae prevented

Nursing Care Management

Nursing care of the child with encephalitis is the same as for any unconscious child and for the child with meningitis. Additional nursing interventions include observation for deterioration in consciousness. Isolation of the child is not necessary; however, follow good hand-washing techniques. A main focus of nursing management is the control of rapidly rising ICP. Neurologic monitoring, administration of medications, and support of the child and parents are the major aspects of care.

Rabies

Rabies is an acute infection of the nervous system caused by a virus that is almost invariably fatal if left untreated. It is transmitted to humans by the saliva of an infected mammal and is introduced through a bite or skin abrasion. After entry into a new host, the