

How Our Memory Cells Protect Us By Dr. Derek Conte

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I'm old enough to remember getting the measles, mumps and chicken pox as a child. It was very uncomfortable. It WAS comforting to know that when I got better, I'd never get the measles, mumps or chicken pox ever again.

Why is that? It is the miracle of our immune system and things called "Memory Cells". Memory Cells produce antibodies after a first exposure to a pathogen, like a virus. Memory Cells are held in reserve until there is a second exposure to the same pathogen.

A first exposure is when we can sometimes get sick for a while because our immune systems do not recognize the pathogen and need time (up to 15 days) to build up the necessary antibodies to fight and defeat it. When we have recovered, the body holds on to some of these highly specific Memory Cells in case we are exposed to the same pathogen a 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th (or more) time.

Upon a second exposure to the same pathogen, the body very rapidly (1-5 days) amplifies the number of antibodies to 100 times the number available in the first exposure and crushes the pathogen even before we develop any of the original symptoms.

Pathogens are everywhere. In the air, in the water and even inside of us, all the time. So why don't we have to live in an hermetically-sealed bubble to survive? Because when we were born and came into the world our immune systems became educated through natural exposure to the environment and learned to adapt and build resistance. At birth, the baby "borrows" some of mother's immune system until his own is built up in about six months. This adaptation continues throughout our lives. So do all you can to keep your immune system **STRONG!**

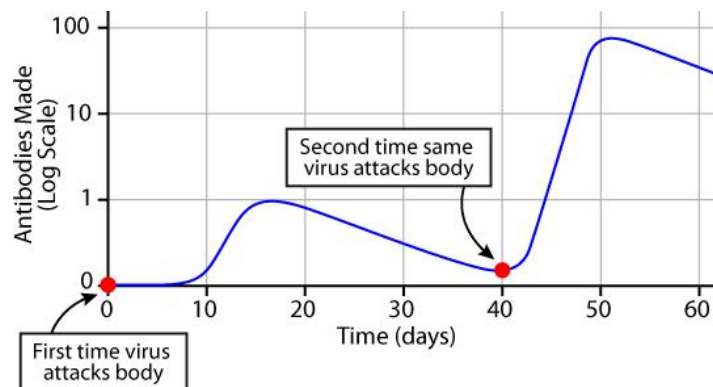


CHART SHOWS ANTIBODY RESPONSE

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