

Henoch Schonlein Purpura

Information for Parents

Henoch Schonlein Purpura (HSP) is a syndrome that occurs in children often following a viral or bacterial infection. The symptoms are caused by a reaction in small blood vessels in skin, joints, abdomen and kidneys.

Children most commonly present with a rash, abdominal pain and joint pain.

The rash develops on the shins and buttocks, and less commonly on the arms and face. It starts off with small, non-blanching, raised spots that eventually fade to brownish patches and disappear. The rash may be itchy, and may recur. It is sometimes associated with swelling of the feet, hands, or lower back.

Abdominal pain is usually crampy, and settles with mild painkillers. Rarely, a child will vomit blood, or pass blood in the stools. The bowel can occasionally swell up and cause a blockage, called intussusception.

The ankles and knees may swell and become painful. However, this is unlikely to have long term effects.

There is no specific blood test for HSP. However, your child will have blood tests to rule out other, more serious, causes of a non-blanching rash.

Your child will also have their urine tested, and blood pressure recorded, to monitor kidney function.

Most children will not need to stay in hospital, unless they have severe joint or abdominal pain, or there is evidence of serious kidney problems.

Kidney problems can occur up to six months after the onset of the illness, so your child will need to be followed up for a minimum of six months.

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The initial review will be in the Rapid Access Clinic, in the Children's Unit, after 2-4 weeks. Depending on your child's symptoms, other appointments for review will be arranged as necessary.

Clinical symptoms, blood pressure and urine testing will be checked at each visit, and blood tests repeated only if indicated.

In the vast majority of children, the illness is benign, and self-limiting.

You should return to Paediatric A&E for urgent review if your child has sudden onset of severe abdominal pain or swelling; coughs or vomits blood; passes blood in the stools or urine; has fits or personality changes; or has swelling round the eyes, especially in the morning.

Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net. If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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We can provide interpreters for a variety of languages, information in larger print or other formats (e.g. audio) - please call us on 01932 723553.



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