

Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP)

Information for parents & carers



Leeds children's
hospital

caring about children

What causes ITP?

ITP, Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura, in childhood is usually an acute, uneventful, self-limiting disorder. ITP occurs when antibodies are formed to fight an infection, but unfortunately also attack the child's own platelets. Platelets are required to clot blood, but although they are low in ITP only 4% of children have significant bleeding. Most children get well without treatment within 3 months from diagnosis and 90% by 6 months.

What happens now?

As long as your child is well, regardless of their platelet count, there is no need to admit them to hospital. Your child can go home and have a normal life but should try to AVOID any violent contact sports or dangerous activities. If they fall and cut themselves they will bleed more than usual and will take longer to stop bleeding. They must NOT be given Brufen, Ibuprofen or Nurofen as these drugs make the bleeding worse. Paracetamol (Calpol) is quite safe. Always discuss any new medications with your doctor.

Will they need regular blood tests?

Blood tests can be done to check the platelet count but generally as long as your child remains well there is no need. Once the diagnosis is made we ask that a repeat count is done 7-10 days later.

When should I bring them back?

Call the numbers below to discuss your child if :

1. They start to bleed spontaneously (i.e. for no obvious reason) or if they have a nose bleed for 30 mins that does not stop despite compression.
2. There is any bleeding in their mouth, on the inside of their cheeks, their soft or hard palate or dramatic bruising of their gums.
3. They have had a violent knock or accident which might have caused internal bleeding, especially if they become weak and tired (these are signs of internal bleeding). The biggest concern is bleeding in the head so head injuries need to prompt an urgent call to the hospital.
4. They have any other significant external bleeding.

We may have to see your child urgently in hospital but treatment is rarely required and will only be given if there is very significant bleeding.



Where else can I find information?

Very helpful and reassuring information can be obtained from the ITP Support Association website: www.itpsupport.org.uk

You also contact us as follows:

During working hours the day unit on:

0113 392 7179 or 0113 392 7379

Out of hours and weekends ward 31 for children on:

0113 392 7431 or ward 33 for teenagers 0113 392 7433

Non malignant haematology clinical nurse specialists on:

0113 3926867 / 07775228860 / 07787266096.



What did you think of your care?

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/nhsleedsfft

Your views matter



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