

How to recognise a possible brain bleed

Information for patients



leeds children's
hospital

caring about children

You have just been told that your baby/toddler has a severe bleeding disorder. One of the rare bleeding problems that can occur is bleeding inside the brain. This information sheet is aimed at helping you to recognise signs that this might be happening.

The signs are often very vague and non-specific, but we would always encourage you to contact us with any concerns you may have.

Many of these signs can be normal or typical in babies and small children but a combination of them may be more significant. Although in some cases bleeding might be associated with a bump to the head, this may not be the case in very young babies in whom the signs of a bleed can be the most subtle.

What to look out for in any baby or toddler

- Poor feeding.
- Sleepiness or lethargy out of keeping with normal sleep pattern - babies in first few weeks of life should not be left to sleep for more than four hours.
- Abnormal movements/fits and seizures such as, jerky or repetitive movements.
- Prolonged crying or other signs of obvious distress (not settling).

- Extremes of temperature, for example fever or unusually cold hands and feet.
- Fast breathing/breath holding.
- Changes in vision, such as being unable to fix and follow on a favourite toy/unable to open one or both eyes.
- Bruising on the face or head.
- Vomiting.

Older children

Older children may be able to tell you about them or you might notice the following signs:

- Headache
- Pins and needles
- Speech difficulties or changes
- Behaviour change
- Abnormal movements or sudden clumsiness

Always seek medical advice if your child shows any of these symptoms - it's the medical team's job to decide if your child needs further assessment.

If your child is unconscious or unresponsive call 999



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