

Henoch-Schonlein Purpura in children

Information for patients



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caring about children

What is Henoch-Schonlein Purpura (HSP)?



HSP is a condition which causes the small blood vessels (capillaries) to become inflamed and damaged, which causes a dark rash similar to a bruise called purpura. As capillaries are present throughout the body the inflammation can cause a variety of symptoms in children.

What are the symptoms of HSP?

HSP causes symptoms in four main areas of the body:

Skin - Present in all cases of HSP, the bruise like rash does not fade when pressed, and can sometimes ulcerate and break down. The rash is usually found on the legs, buttocks, tummy and arms.

Digestive system - Children can get stomach pains, and may have bloody diarrhoea.

Joints - Children may have painful and/or swollen joints.

Kidneys - there may be protein and blood in the urine (wee), as the capillaries in the kidneys can be affected. You will be asked to closely monitor your child's urine over the coming weeks.

What causes HSP?

There is no one specific cause. Most children who develop HSP, develop symptoms following a simple illness, such as a cough, cold or throat infection. This triggers the body to generate an autoimmune response, which causes the damage to the small blood vessels.

How is HSP diagnosed?

There is no test to diagnose HSP, and it is diagnosed based on your child's examination and the history behind the rash or illness.

All children need to have their blood pressure checked and their urine tested to check for blood and protein.

All children with suspected HSP will have routine bloods sent to look at their blood count (red cells, white cells, platelets), clotting factors, and their kidney function and liver function. These are to support the diagnosis of HSP, but are undertaken to ensure there isn't another condition causing the symptoms.

What is the treatment for HSP?

There is no specific treatment for HSP and the symptoms should improve slowly over time. This may take several weeks, or even months in some circumstances.

Children should have simple medicines such as Paracetamol to help with pain or discomfort. Some children may be advised not to take Ibuprofen, but the clinician that has seen you will advise if your child is safe to take Ibuprofen or not.

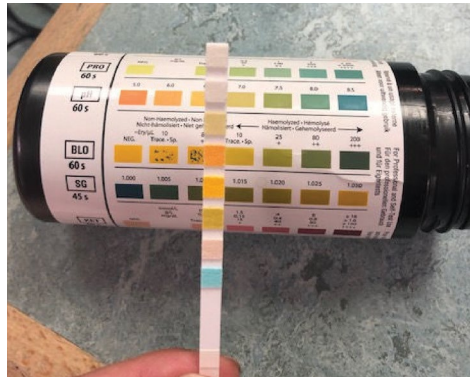
Will my child need follow up?

All children diagnosed with HSP will need to be followed up in clinic by the Children's Medical Team. This will be within 3-4 weeks of your initial attendance. In this clinic the Children's team will assess your child's blood pressure and test their urine. Some children may require blood tests during this appointment, but these will be explained to you if they are required.

You will be asked to test your child's urine daily, with urine test strips until your follow up appointment.

How do I test my child's urine?

The urine strips you will have been given are called Multistix 8SG. There are eight different tests on this strip, but you should be looking at the 4th (BLOOD) and 6th (PROTEIN) from the bottom.



Collect your child's urine in a clean container (potty or small plastic dish).

Dip the testing strip into the urine and tap off excess.

Wait 60 seconds and then compare the tested strip with the colours on the box. Write in the table on pages 6 and 7 of this leaflet whether it is negative or whether there is + or ++ or +++ for both blood and protein.

If there is a delay in comparing the strip, use another strip and test again as the colour will change over time, and may give false results.

Test the urine daily until your child's follow up appointment in 3-4 weeks.

Call **0113 392 7409** to speak to the Children's Assessment and Treatment (CAT) team for advice if any of the following happen:

- Urine dipstick shows > 1+ protein for three consecutive days.
- There is any visible blood (red or cola coloured) in the urine.
- There is any significant swelling/puffiness to your child's face or body with protein in the urine.

When does my child need to be reviewed more urgently?

You should also contact the **CAT team** on **0113 392 7409** if your child develops the following symptoms:

- **Severe abdominal or joint pain**
- **Dark green vomiting or blood in stools**
- **Blood in urine or unable to pass urine for 12 hours**
- **Testicular pain or swelling in boys.**



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