For more information on HSP, please see
www.infokid.org/conditions

Produced through regional collaboration by the Paediatric Innovation, Education & Research Network and adapted for local use

HENOCH-SCHONLEIN PURPURA (HSP)

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS & PARENTS

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What is HSP?

It is a rare condition. It is often triggered by a preceding infection such as a sore throat, cough or cold. The exact cause is unknown. The rash is due to inflammation of blood vessels in the skin leading to redness and bruising. Other organs, such as the gut, joints and kidneys are sometimes affected by the inflammation.

Is HSP serious?

Not usually. The rash, joint pains and abdominal pains usually resolve over days or weeks without needing any treatment. HSP often recurs after the first attack.

Rarely HSP can cause serious complications such as kidney failure or a type of blockage in the gut called intussusception or convulsions.

Why have I been asked to dipstick test my child's urine?

To check if the HSP is causing you child's kidneys to be inflamed and to continue monitoring for this complication. Almost all children who have HSP have some degree of kidney inflammation. Inflammation will cause tiny amounts of blood and protein in the urine that cannot be seen with the naked eye.

It is possible to have kidney inflammation without any symptoms or signs other than a positive urine dipstick test. Sometimes the kidney inflammation can develop weeks or months after the rash has gone. Kidney inflammation usually gets better without any complications or need for treatment but very rarely it can lead to kidney failure.

How do I dipstick test my child's urine?

Collect the first urine your child does in the morning in a clean container. (Urine collected later in the day might have a falsely high level of protein in it). Before you leave the ward the nurses will show you how to dip the urine with the dipsticks and read off the protein and blood levels.

How often, and for how long, should I dipstick my child's urine?

Weekly for four weeks, then monthly unless your doctor tells you to do it more often. This should be done for 6 months, or until there is no blood or protein on the dipstick. Your doctor will advise you on the duration of testing.

What am I looking for?

You are looking for microscopic amounts of blood or protein in the urine that cannot be seen with naked eye. The dipsticks can detect other substances, such as ketones, but you can ignore these squares on the stick.

What do I do if the dipstick is positive for blood?

When blood is seen on the dipstick for the first time you will need to contact the hospital so that your child's blood pressure can be checked. Blood detected in the dipstick is not usually a cause for concern and often continues for months in HSP. No further action is required if your child is well.
If the urine looks red, rusty coloured or bloody to the naked eye contact the hospital so we can check your child's kidneys.

What do I do if the dipstick is positive for protein?

Remember you should test the first urine your child does in the morning.

If the protein is + or trace then do the dipstick test once per month until your child is seen in outpatients. No further action is required unless the amount of protein is increasing.

If the protein is ++ or more on the dipsticks then do the dipstick test again the next day. If it is still ++ or more protein then phone the hospital (see below) so we can check your child's kidneys. You will probably be asked to collect one or more early morning urine samples to be sent to the lab. Blood tests may be necessary.

When should I contact the hospital?

1. If your child's urine is red, rusty or blood coloured.
2. If your child's urine has ++ or more protein on the urine dipstick two days in a row.
3. If the joint swelling is very painful and especially if it stops your child walking.
4. If your child has severe tummy aches or if your child vomits green fluid (bile) or there is blood in the poo.
5. If your child's testicles are swollen or painful.
6. If your instincts as a parent tell you something is seriously wrong with your child.

How do I contact the hospital?

To contact the hospital, please call ……

What to do now:

1. Check your child's' urine weekly.
2. Your child will be followed up by your GP for monthly Blood Pressure.
3. This will continue every month for six months.
4. If you need to see the paediatric consultant at any time during this six months your GP will make this referral for you.

Date	Dipstick result for protein	Dipstick result for blood