

## Henoch Schonlein Purpura - Parent Information Sheet

### Introduction

Your child has been diagnosed with a condition called Henoch Schonlein Purpura (HSP). This is a condition that affects children of any age but most commonly between 2 and 8 years old.

HSP is a vasculitis, this means there is inflammation of some of the small blood vessels in the body, commonly vessels in the skin, the gut and the kidneys.

While we don't know the exact cause, we do know it often occurs in the autumn or spring and is observed to happen after a viral infection or during cold weather.

Doctors don't know how to prevent HSP yet.

### Your child may have some or all of the following complaints:

- A skin rash called "purpura" This means the spots do not disappear when you press them- it is due to small leaks from blood vessels in the skin.
- Tummy ache, caused by inflammation of small blood vessels in the gut.
- Blood in the urine, caused by inflammation in the small blood vessels in the kidneys- this can range from blood only visible on a urine test to obvious blood in the urine.
- Pain in the joints: such as the knees or ankles.
- Blood in the poo.

### HSP is NOT contagious

### Complications

Most children who get HSP recover completely.

- Serious kidney problems can occur but they do not happen very often.
- Rarely abnormal folding of the bowel can occur if the bowel telescopes in on itself. This causes a block in the bowel that can require an urgent procedure to correct it or, very rarely surgery.
- Your doctor will explain what to look out for in case of complications and will give you a clear follow up plan to ensure any complications are properly managed.

## **Medicines to treat HSP**

- There is no specific treatment for HSP. Medicines can help your child feel better and manage the symptoms.
- Your doctor will recommend pain medicine which will help with tummy ache and joint pain; these are usually paracetamol and ibuprofen.
- Sometimes the doctor may prescribe a course of steroid medicine called prednisolone; this may help if your child has bad tummy ache or joint problems.

## **Follow up**

**HSP** requires regular follow up at intervals for at least 6 months and in some cases a yearly check up for life may be needed. The doctor will advise you of the follow up plan needed for your child.

## **When to come back to the ED**

- If your child has obvious visible blood in urine.
- If your GP feels an ED review is needed.
- If your child has severe pain – tummy, joints or genitalia.
- If you are worried.