

Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

What Causes ITP?

ITP, Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura, in childhood is usually an acute, uneventful, self-limiting disorder. Antibodies are formed and attack the child's own platelets. Platelets are required to clot blood (stop bleeding) but in ITP only four percent of children have significant bleeding. Most children get well without treatment within three 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 Neurofen 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?

Once the diagnosis is made, we ask that a repeat count is done seven to 10 days later, followed by at three weeks and then at three months. Following that, as long as your child remains well, there is no need for further testing.

When should I bring my child 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 nosebleed for 30 minutes which does not stop despite compression.
2. If you notice any bleeding in their mouth, on the inside of their cheeks, their soft or hard palate (top of their mouth) or bruising of their gums.
3. If they have had a violent knock, internal bleeding needs to be excluded especially if they become weak and tired (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

Hospital contact number to ring if concerned about your child:

Rainbow ward, Scarborough: 01723 342 336

Ward 17, York: 01904 726017

Under care of (consultant) Dr.....

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Dr Rebecca Proudfoot, Consultant Paediatrician, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725314 or email yhs-tr.ChildHealthAdmin@nhs.net.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

Owner	Rebecca Proudfoot, Consultant Paediatrician
Date first issued	September 2020
Review Date	January 2028
Version	2 (issued January 2025)
Approved by	Dr Mike Richards, Consultant Haematologist, LGI
Document Reference	PIL1723 v2
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