

Management of bruising, bites and suspicious marks in children for Community health professionals and child care workers

Presentation

Bruising which suggests the possibility of Non Accidental Injury include:

- Bruising in babies (in arms).
- Bruising in children who are not independently mobile (including disabled)
- Bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- Bruises around mouth & cheeks, back, abdomen, upper arms, buttocks & ear lobes.
- Multiple bruises in clusters
- Multiple bruises of uniform shape
- Bruises that carry an imprint – of an implement or cord
- Bruises with *petechiae* (dots of blood under the skin) around them

Making an 'Assessment'

A mark/bruise should never be interpreted in isolation and must always be assessed in the context of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and explanation given. Where there is concern that it may be suspicious professionals are advised not to make their own assessment but to seek a child protection medical via Children Services (children's social care)

Pre-mobile babies/immobile children

It is recommended that in all cases of bruising/suspicious marks in pre-mobile infants/immobile children and all those under six months you:

- Advise carers of your concerns (you can show this flowchart to explain the actions that you must take)

Refer to Children Services

(research has shown a small bruise on a pre mobile baby can be a sign of abuse)

Mobile children

(Be alert to multiple or large facial bruising)
Does history fit the bruising?

Yes

Record assessment & no further action

NO

- If carer is present advise them of your concerns and refer to Children Services
- If carer not present do not contact but refer to Children Services and ascertain the action plan
- Contact your safeguarding lead if in doubt but do not delay if you are unable to make immediate contact

Children Service Referral - telephone: 0300 123 4043

- Clearly state your concerns
- Give your contact details.
- Check plan of action by reflecting back (expectation is that SW will attend, maybe with police and have arranged a child protection medical with paediatrician).
- Advise your Safeguarding lead of your actions.
- Follow up referral in writing and email to: protectedreferrals.cs@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Remain with family or request they do not leave .If it is not safe for you to remain or if they try to leave then advise that you will call the police

Family must be escorted to site where medical has been arranged

Document all information in your agency records/system with body maps
Do not photograph