

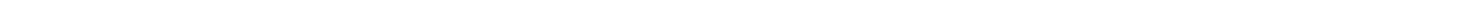


Sandwell and West Birmingham
NHS Trust

Unexplained injury or bruising or fracture in a child

Information and advice for carers and relatives

Nuclear Medicine



If you need an interpreter we can arrange this for you, please ask.

You have been given this leaflet if you have a child who has an injury such as a bruise or fracture ('broken bone') for which there is no clear explanation.

We will look for the possible cause, which includes: medical; non-medical; witnessed/unwitnessed accidental injury and non-accidental injury. We may need to consider non-accidental injury particularly in very young children. Non accidental injury means that someone has injured the baby. Some children can come to harm by the hands of their carers.

We have a duty of care to follow the recommendations of Sandwell Safeguarding Children Partnership and National Guidance (Children Act 1989 and 2004).

All investigations are performed in the best interests of the child.

This leaflet explains the investigations that need to be carried out when assessing the unexplained injury. The doctor (usually the paediatric consultant) or your named nurse will explain these tests in more detail.

This does not mean we are implying you have mistreated your child but that we have a duty of care to investigate.

Investigations

Your child may require some or all of the following tests.

Blood tests

These may include a blood count, tests for easy bruising, calcium, vitamin D level and sometimes other blood tests which the doctor will explain.

Eye examination

An Eye doctor will look at the back of the eyes. They may need to use special equipment to keep the eyelids open. This is not a painful procedure but can be uncomfortable for the child. Eye drops are used to help the doctor to see the back of the eyes better. We can use the child's own blanket and pacifier to help settle them during the examination.

Skeletal survey

2 trained radiographers will assist in obtaining multiple x-rays of the body. This usually takes 45-60 minutes to complete. We do not have parents/carers inside the room where the X-Rays are being performed.

If the child becomes unsettled, dummies/comforters where possible can be used. We may need to use sedation (medicine used to help a baby sleep through the test).

This will be explained in more detail, please ask if you have any questions.

We will repeat X-Rays of the chest and limbs 10-14 days later.

CT scan of head

This is usually performed after a feed and wrapping in the child's blanket. Older children may need sedation to help them sleep through the scan. It is important that the child lies very still for the test. It takes up to 5 minutes to perform. The purpose of the scan is to look for any injury to the brain or skull.

Parents/carers are not present in the CT scan room whilst the scan is being performed.

Sometimes, we may perform a MRI scan of the brain during the hospital stay or as an out-patient. The scan is performed in the same way as a CT scan but takes longer.

IF YOU NEED THESE TESTS EXPLAINED FURTHER PLEASE ASK YOUR NURSE/DOCTOR.

Consent

You will be given a full explanation for these tests by one of the paediatric team who will then ask for your consent to undertake the tests. If you decide to withhold consent, then the medical team will seek consent through social services.

Medical photography

We may ask to take photographs of the body. These form part of the medical record. We will ask for consent. If photographs are required we will discuss this with you.

Information sharing

In all cases of unexplained injury a referral to Social Services will be made in line with child safeguarding policies. A Social Worker and sometimes a Police Officer will interview you and your family. The Social worker has a legal duty to investigate any unexplained injury reported to them. They will be informed of your child's injury as soon as the medical team consider that the injury is not sufficiently explained.

We will share information about your child and family relevant to their diagnosis with other professionals. This may include your GP, Community Midwife, Nursery, Health Visitor, School nurse, Police and any other health professionals involved in your child's care.

Following the investigations and information gathering we hold a Strategy Meeting. This meeting is where all professionals involved share the information gathered. If this is to take place, Social Services will inform you. The purpose is to discuss the outcome of all the relevant information including results of investigations mentioned earlier in the leaflet. The above process may take between 3-10 days or longer to complete.

We cannot discharge any child with an unexplained injury until a discharge plan from social services has been agreed.

As health professionals we strive to always act in the best interest of your child. We will keep you informed throughout the process.

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact SWB Library Services on ext 3587 or email swbh.library@nhs.net.



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