

Q: What will Children's Social Care and the health specialist do?

Children's Social Care and the health professionals will check whether you have received services from them in the past, ask for information from your GP and your Health Visitor and may make arrangements to speak to you either by phone or in person. This may be at the same time as your attendance with the specialist doctor or at a separate appointment and they may want to visit you at home. They will then discuss their findings with the specialist doctor who examined your child to decide together whether any further action needs to be taken or any treatment given.

Q: All of this is very upsetting. I feel as though I am being accused of hurting my child. Why do I have to be put through this?

We know this can be very upsetting but the only way of picking up serious causes for bruising or injuries is to investigate every case where it occurs. However you can be reassured that you will be treated with courtesy and sensitivity and your explanations will be listened to and discussed with you. You will also be kept informed at all times so that you know what is going on and why. You can ask questions at any time and will be given the opportunity to discuss your concerns fully at every stage.

Worker to Insert the
Following Contact Details:

If you would like to discuss this further
please contact:

Local Children's Social Care Phone Number:

Telephone number for Local Paediatric Unit

What's going on?

Information for parents and
carers about bruising or injuries
to immobile children



You have been given this leaflet because someone who supports you or your child has concerns about their health.

Any professional who comes across bruising or injuries in a child who is not able to move around on their own (non-independently mobile or immobile) are required to refer a child to a specialist child doctor (Paediatrician).

Immobile children are those who are not yet crawling, cruising or walking independently or are older children who are not mobile because of a disability or development delay.

Your child will also be referred to children's Social Care, who will work with the specialist child doctor to decide what further steps, if any, need to be taken.

Q: Why do immobile children with a bruise or injury need to see a specialist doctor?

It is rare for children who are not able to move around by themselves to have a bruise and injuries. A bruise or injury can be a sign of a health condition, a blood disorder or an infection. This means it is important that a specialist child doctor looks at your child and discusses with you why there might be a bruise or injury.

Q: Why are bruises and injuries in immobile children such a concern?

It is difficult to cause bruising in immobile children with day-to-day activities such as feeding, nappy changing and normal handling. Even where babies fall or get knocked it is unusual for them to bruise (unlike children crawling or walking who often get bruises) or for them to injure themselves. However, there are also some important causes of bruising which may affect the child's health, for example due to haemophilia, or a blood disease. Very occasionally bruising may be due to deliberate injury. Even where there is an apparent simple explanation it is important to rule out these more serious conditions. It also sometimes takes an expert to tell the difference between a bruise and certain types of birthmarks.

Q: I understand the reason for seeing a child specialist but why do I need to be referred to Children's Social Care?

Although rare, bruising is occasionally caused by a deliberate injury. It is important that where this occurs, it is picked up as soon as possible in order to support the family and protect the child. Referral to Children's Social Care is not an accusation of wrongdoing, but a way of looking for causes of bruising or injuries in the same way that the doctor looks for illness.

Q: What will happen next?

Either a health professional, or a member of Children's Social Care will contact you to talk about your child and what will happen next. Arrangements will be made to have an appointment as soon as possible, and preferably straight away with a specialist doctor. The specialist doctor will talk to you about your child, examine your child fully and decide whether or not to do further investigations such as blood tests or x-rays and decide whether your child needs any further treatment. The specialist child doctor will then talk to Children's Social Care.