

High blood pressure (hypertension) with kidney disease



What is hypertension?

Hypertension is also known as high blood pressure.

- It means that your child's blood pressure is the same as or higher than 9 out of 10 children who are the same sex, age and height as your child.
- There is not one "normal" blood pressure reading for children like there is for adults.

What causes high blood pressure in children?

High blood pressure in children is often due to other health problems, especially in children younger than 10 years of age. It can be caused by things like:

- Kidney disease
- Being overweight (especially in older children)
- Heart disease
- Genetic problems (passed from parent to child through the genes)
- Hormone problems or diabetes

What symptoms could my child have?

Most children have no symptoms of high blood pressure. Some children with high blood pressure may have:

- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Trouble thinking or learning
- Chest pain
- Blurred vision
- Shortness of breath

What tests could my child have?

Take your child to see their primary care doctor if they have symptoms of high blood pressure. The doctor or nurse will check your child's blood pressure. It may take several visits to find out if your child has high blood pressure.

If your child has high blood pressure, they may need 1 or more of these tests:

- Urine tests
- Blood tests (labs). This may include testing:
 - Blood glucose (also called blood sugar)
 - Kidney function

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

High blood pressure with kidney disease, continued

- Blood counts
- Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM)
- Heart ultrasound (echocardiogram, or echo)
- Kidney ultrasound

What is the treatment?

There is often no cure for high blood pressure, but it can be treated and controlled. Treatment depends on what is causing it but may include:

- Eating a healthy diet.
- Eating less salt (sodium).
- Exercising more.
- Controlling weight.
- For teens who smoke, stop smoking.
- Taking medicines to help control blood pressure.

What follow-up care does my child need?

Your child needs good follow-up care to help prevent problems caused by high blood pressure, such as heart disease, kidney disease and stroke. Follow up with your child's primary care doctor or kidney doctor (nephrologist) as advised.

- Have your child's blood pressure checked often.
- Get medical tests as needed.
- Give your child any medicines the doctor prescribes.

Talk with your child's doctor about a treatment plan for your child. Ask them as many questions as needed.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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