

Blood in the urine (hematuria) in children



Paediatric & Neonatology Department

Should I be worried if there is blood in my child's urine?

It can be scary to see blood in your child's urine. But try to stay calm. Blood in the urine is not usually serious. Still, it is important to bring your child to see a doctor or nurse. The medical term for blood in the urine is "hematuria."

Blood in the urine can come from the kidneys (where urine is made) or anywhere in the urinary tract. The urinary tract includes all the organs that deal with urine.



What causes blood in urine?

Blood in urine can be caused by lots of problems. In children, these include:

- Urinary tract or bladder infection, which can cause burning or pain when urinating
- Kidney infection, which can cause back pain and fever
- Kidney stones, which usually cause belly or back pain
- Irritation of the urethra (the tube that connects the bladder to the outside of the body)
- Certain kidney diseases
- Intense exercise
- Injury (for example, if your child falls off a bike and bruises a kidney)

Sometimes, urine can look as though it is bloody even though it isn't. This can happen if your child eats a lot of beets or food dyes or takes certain medicines.

Should my child see a doctor or nurse?

Yes. See a doctor or nurse if you see blood in your child's urine, or if your child's urine is pink, red, brownish-red, or the color of tea.

Sometimes, doctors find blood in the urine when they do a routine urine test. That can happen even if the urine looks normal. It means there are microscopic (trace) amounts of blood in the urine.

Sometimes, your child might need to see a doctor who specializes in treating kidney problems in children.

Which tests should my child have?

Your doctor or nurse will decide which tests to do based on your child's symptoms and individual situation. There are lots of tests, but your child might not need all of them.

Here are the most common tests doctors use to find the cause of blood in urine in children:

- **Urine tests** – Urine tests can show what kind of cells are in the urine. This can hold clues about what might be going wrong. The doctor might also measure the amount of protein in your child's urine, since too much protein can be a sign of a kidney problem.

- **Blood tests** – Blood tests can show whether the kidneys are working normally, or if the child has other health problems.
- **Kidney ultrasound** – A kidney ultrasound is a type of imaging tests doctors use to create a picture of the kidneys. It can show if your child has kidney stones or other problems.
- **CT scan** – A CT scan is a special kind of X-ray. It creates a picture of the kidneys and urinary tract. If your child has blood in their urine after an injury, their doctor will probably do a CT scan or ultrasound to check their urinary tract for problems.
- **Blood pressure** – Your child's blood pressure will probably be measured. That's because high blood pressure can be a sign of certain kidney problems.



Should my child be treated?

That depends on what seems to have caused the blood in your child's urine. If your child had blood in their urine because of a bruise to the kidney, they might not need any treatment. But if your child has blood in their urine because of a bladder or kidney infection, they will probably need antibiotics.

If your child has trace amounts of blood in their urine and it doesn't go away over time, they might have something called "familial hematuria." This condition often affects family members, so your child's doctor might suggest that other people in your family get urine tests, too. In most families, familial hematuria does not cause any other symptoms.

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