



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

A group of disorders that cause inflammation of the glomeruli. These are filtering units in the kidneys that help filter out waste products and water and salt from the blood. Over time, the inflammation can lead to loss of kidney function. It is more common in children 5 to 15 years old, and occurs in males more than females.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Mild inflammation produces no symptoms. Diagnosis is possible only with urine studies.
- Dark-colored urine (color of tea or a cola drink).
- Reduced urine.
- Urine may be bloody.
- Puffy eyelids.
- Swelling of the face, hands, feet, and stomach.
- Side pain.
- Weakness.
- Headache, fever, nausea, or vomiting.
- High blood pressure. It causes no symptoms, but may be measured with home blood pressure monitors.
- Shortness of breath.
- Loss of appetite.

CAUSES

- Postinfectious type (more common). This type develops after a *streptococcus* (often referred to as strep) infection. It may be a strep infection such as a sore throat or a skin infection.
- Other types (less common). These may be caused by other types of infections, whole body (systemic) diseases, IV drug abuse, kidney (renal) disease, and other medical problems. Sometimes the cause is unknown.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Strep infection, such as scarlet fever.
- Persons diagnosed with any of the possible causes.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

No specific preventive measures. Get treatment for any strep infection to help reduce risk.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Outlook is excellent for most post-streptococcal cases in children. Mild cases may recover on their own. Some may be helped with treatment. Symptoms usually improve in 2 weeks to several months.
- In those cases caused by other medical problems, the outcome will vary depending on the underlying cause.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Kidney failure. It may lead to dialysis (use of a machine to filter body waste) and a kidney transplant.
- Chronic glomerulonephritis.
- Complications may occur in patients who have other health problems such as severe high blood pressure.



DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Your health care provider will do a physical exam and ask questions about your symptoms and recent illnesses. Medical tests may include blood, urine studies, and x-rays. A kidney biopsy may be done. This involves removal of a small amount of kidney tissue for viewing under a microscope.
- The goals of treatment are to relieve symptoms and to treat and prevent complications. Treatment may involve drugs, diet changes, and extra rest.
- Hospital care may be needed for severe symptoms.
- To learn more: National Kidney Foundation, 30 E. 33rd St., Suite 1100, New York, NY 10016; (800) 622-9010; website: www.kidney.org.

MEDICATIONS

- You may be prescribed:
 - Antibiotics for strep infection.
 - Drugs for high blood pressure.
 - Diuretics, to help remove excess fluid.
 - Steroids, to reduce inflammation.
 - Drugs, to suppress the immune system.
 - Drugs for other types of infection, or to treat an underlying disorder.

ACTIVITY

Stay in bed, except to go to the bathroom, until symptoms have improved. Bed rest ensures an adequate blood flow to the kidney. Blood flow is best when lying down. Resume normal activities gradually.

DIET

Diet changes may be recommended to help reduce the work of the kidneys. These may include eating less salt, potassium, and protein.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of glomerulonephritis.
- Urine changes color or urine output is decreased.
- New symptoms occur during treatment.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page