

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER - FACT SHEET

PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIOR INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruises (in various stages of healing)
- Unexplained burns (cigarette or immersion)
- Unexplained fractures, lacerations, or abrasions
- Evidence of delayed or inappropriate treatment for injuries

Behavioral Indicators

- Withdrawn, self-destructive, aggressive behaviors
- Afraid to be at home/runaway behavior in adolescents
- Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably
- Bizarre explanation of injuries
- Wary of adult contact, apprehensiveness with others

Physical Neglect

Physical Indicators

- Abandonment
- Unattended medical needs, distended stomach, emaciated
- Consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress
- Consistent lack of supervision

Behavioral Indicators

- Frequently absent or tardy
- Regularly displays fatigue, listlessness
- Steals food, extreme need for affection, extreme loneliness
- Reports no caretaker at home

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators

- Injury/trauma to genital area noted by trained professional during medical exam
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Pain, swelling, or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleed in genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease

Behavioral Indicators

- New fears of persons or places/withdrawn behavior
- Unusual aggressiveness
- Sexual play beyond what is considered normal
- Fear that there is something wrong with genital area
- Regressed or baby-like behavior
- Sleep problems, nightmares

It is suggested that children who are suspected of being abused be referred for a full evaluation, including a medical exam and interview, by trained professionals.

Call Children's Hospital Social Services Department with Questions or Concerns

(513) 636-4711

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*Information for this fact sheet obtained from CHMC Social Services Dept. and the National Children's Advocacy Center.
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CHMC Social Services Department*