



# PEDIATRIC HEALTHCARE UNLIMITED

## Hives (Urticaria)

### DEFINITION

#### Diagnostic Findings

- Very itchy rash
- Raised pink spots with pale centers (Hives look like mosquito bites.)
- Size range of 1/2 inch to several inches across
- Shapes quite variable
- Rapid and repeated changes of location, size, and shape

#### Cause

Hives are an allergic reaction to a food, drug, viral infection, insect bite, or a host of other substances. Usually the cause is not found. Hives are not contagious.

#### Expected Course

More than 10% of children get hives. Most children who develop hives have it only once. The hives come and go for 3 to 4 days and then mysteriously disappear.

### HOME TREATMENT

**Antihistamine Medicine.** The best drug for hives is an antihistamine. An antihistamine won't cure the hives, but it will reduce their number and relieve itching. Benadryl is one of the most commonly used drugs for hives. The main side effect of this drug is drowsiness. If you have another antihistamine (for example, any drug for hay fever) at home, use it until you can get some Benadryl. Give Benadryl four times daily in the following dosages:

	CHILD'S WEIGHT (LB)					
	20	40	60	80	100	120
Benadryl liquid, 12.5mg/5ml	2.5 ml	5 ml	10 ml	15 ml	17.5 ml	20 ml
Benadryl tablets (25mg)	—	1/2	1	1	1.5	2

A cool bath will also make your child feel better. In the meantime, avoid anything you think might have brought on the hives.

### Common Mistakes in Treatment of Hives.

Many parents wait to give the antihistamine until new hives have appeared. This means your child will become itchy again. The purpose of the medicine is to keep your child comfortable until the hives go away.

Therefore give the medicine regularly until you are sure the hives are completely gone.

Since hives are not contagious, your child can be with other children.

### CALL OUR OFFICE

IMMEDIATELY if

- Breathing or swallowing becomes difficult.
- The tongue becomes swollen.
- Any abdominal pain occurs.
- Your child starts acting very sick.

During regular hours if

- Most of the itch is not relieved after your child has been taking the medicine for 24 hours.
- The hives last more than 1 week.
- A fever (over 100° F [37.8° C]) occurs.
- Joint swelling or pain occurs.
- You have other concerns or questions.