

Ask the Expert: Sentinel Injuries

Bruising:

A collection of blood under the skin following damage to the tissue/blood vessels

Appearance depends on:

- Object/surface that caused the bruise
- Duration of impact
- Amount of bleeding & distance of blood from the skin
- Time since impact
- Force of impact
- Body region impacted
- Age and health of the patient
- Skin pigmentation

Most common manifestation of physical abuse

Most common antecedent injury before abuse related fatality or near fatality in young children

Bruising clinical decision rule

TEN-4-FACESp

Bruising Clinical Decision Rule for Children < 4 Years of Age

TEN
Torso | Ears | Neck



FACES
Frenulum
Angle of Jaw
Cheeks (*fleshy part*)
Eyelids
Subconjunctivae

REGIONS

4 months and younger



Any bruise, anywhere

INFANTS

Patterned bruising



Bruises in specific patterns like slap, grab or loop marks

PATTERNS

See the signs

Unexplained bruises in these areas most often result from physical assault. TEN-4-FACESp is not to diagnose abuse but to function as a screening tool to improve the recognition of potentially abused children with bruising who require further evaluation.

TEN-4-FACESp was developed and validated by Dr. Mary Clyde Pierce and colleagues. It is published and available for FREE download at luriechildrens.org/ten-4-facesp.



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Physical abuse/occult injury screening

May include:

- full skin exam
- skeletal survey
- neuroimaging
- abdominal imaging

How to consult UVA child protection team

- 434-924-KIDS
- Ask for child protection team provider on call (normal business hours)
- If urgent/emergent call or send to ED

Other resources:

- LCAST App (bruising clinical decision support tool in app form)
- Child Protector App

The information provided in this document is intended as general educational guidance to be considered by you in the specific context of your patients' medical needs. As guidance, it is not intended as a substitute for consultation with a specialist. If you have questions or wish to speak with one of our pediatric specialists at UVA Health Children's Hospital, please call 424-924-KIDS.