Q: What will Children’s Social Care and the health specialist do?

A: Children’s Social Care and the health professionals will check whether you have received services from them in the past, they will ask for information from your GP and your Health Visitor and will make arrangements to speak to you either by phone or in person. This may be at the same time as your attendance with the specialist children’s doctor or at a separate appointment and they may want to visit you at home. They will then discuss their findings with the specialist child doctor who examined your child to decide together whether any further action needs to be taken or any treatment given.

Q: All of this is very upsetting. I feel as though I am being accused of hurting my child. Why do I have to be put through this?

A: We know this can be very upsetting but the only way of picking up serious cause for bruising is to investigate every case where it occurs. However you can be reassured that you will be treated with courtesy and sensitivity and your explanations will be listened to and discussed with you. You will also be kept informed at all times so that you know what is going on and why. You can ask questions at any time and will be given the opportunity to discuss your concerns fully at every stage.

Please contact:
Durham County or Darlington Council's Children's Services if you would like to discuss this further

DURHAM
First Contact
24 Hour line
03000 267 979
firstcontact-gcsx@durham.gcsx.gov.uk

DARLINGTON
CAP Children’s Access Point
During office hours
01325 406222
ccdref@darlington.gcsx.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team (EDT)
Out of Office Hours
08702 402 994

LSCB Websites:
http://www.durham-lscb.org.uk/
Q: Why do immobile children with a bruise need to see a specialist doctor?
A: It is rare for children who are not able to move around by themselves to have a bruise. A bruise can be a sign of a health condition, a blood disease or an infection. This means it is important that a specialist child doctor looks at your child and discusses with you why there might be a bruise.

Q: Why is bruising in immobile children such a concern?
A: It is difficult to cause bruising in immobile children with day-to-day activities such as feeding, nappy changing and normal handling. Even where babies fall or get knocked it is unusual for them to bruise (unlike children who are crawling or walking who often get bruises). However, there are also some important causes of bruising which may seriously affect the child’s health. The child may bruise easily, for example due to haemophilia, or be suffering from a blood disease such as leukemia or an infection such as meningitis. Very occasionally bruising may be due to deliberate injury. Even where there is an apparent simple explanation it is important to rule out these more serious conditions. It also sometimes takes an expert to tell the difference between a bruise and certain types of birthmark.

Q: I understand the reason for seeing a child specialist but why do I need to be referred to Children’s Social Care?
A: Although rare, bruising is occasionally caused by deliberate injury. It is important that where this occurs, it is picked up as soon as possible in order to support the family and protect the child. Referral to Children’s Social Care is not an accusation of wrong doing, but a way if looking for causes of bruising in the same way that the doctor looks for illness.

Q: What will happen next?
A: Either a health professional, or a member of Childen’s Social Care, will contact you to talk to you about your child and what will happen next. Arrangements will be made to have an appointment as soon as possible, and preferably straight away, with a specialist children’s doctor. The specialist children’s doctor will talk to you about your child, examine your child fully and decide whether or not to do further investigations such as blood tests or x-rays and decide whether your child needs any further treatment. The specialist children’s doctor will then talk to Children’s Social Care.