

**URTICARIA
(Hives)
Level II**

Skill Level: RN

Definition: Itchy, red, raised papules or welts with a characteristic appearance. Although usually representing an allergic reaction (drugs, foods, insect bites, inhalants, or injections), no cause is found in 70 percent of cases.

MODERATE	
<p>Subjective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My hives are still here, I'm no better." • Denies difficulty breathing. • Lesions come and go. 	<p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alteration in skin integrity: Urticaria (Hives) • Alteration in comfort.
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continues with red, raised papules or welts with minimal improvement. • Will blanch with pressure. • Chest auscultation is clear. • No angioedema (swelling of the face, mouth or throat). • No hoarseness. • No respiratory distress. • May be a rapidly spreading rash (over the course of minutes to 2 hours.) 	<p><u>If respiratory distress, hoarseness, throat swelling, or shock present go to appropriate emergency protocol-- (Anaphylaxis, Shock and/or Asthma)</u></p> <p>Check for allergies <u>If rapidly spreading rash,</u> give Benadryl or Vistaril 50 mg IM. Recheck patient for improvement within 2 hours of giving IM anti-histamine. Call provider if angioedema of face or mouth is present. At nursing discretion, may do any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zyrtec 10 mg daily for 5 days. • Refer to Practitioner if symptoms are recurrent or not improving after 5 days. • If there is convincing evidence that the episode is urticarial, and related to a new medication, consider advising that the medication be held and schedule the patient with the practitioner. (See Nursing Education below.)

Urticaria (Hives) - Level II

Nursing Education:

1. A cause for urticaria is usually not found.
2. Symptoms and signs can come and go without explanation.
3. Ask patient about new exposures to medications, toxins, soaps, etc.
4. If convincing evidence that a new medication is the cause (new diagnosis of hives in a patient who has recently started a new medication), advise patient to stop taking the medication and make an appointment with the practitioner.
5. Stress can cause the condition in itself.
6. Sometimes can progress to Anaphylaxis when severe systemic allergic exposure.

APPROVED:

Medical Services Manager

Date

Chief Medical Officer

Date

Steve Shelton M.D.

Medical Director

2/24/2015

Date

Effective Date 3/2015

Revised: February 2015