"NEPHROTIC WHAT?!..."

Understanding Primary Nephrotic Syndrome

TIP: Don’t be intimidated by the disease names; they are just descriptions of how the kidney tissue looks under a microscope.

Nephrotic Syndrome (NS) is not a disease, but an umbrella term for the collection of signs and symptoms that occur when the kidney filters (glomeruli) leak protein into the urine.

Some symptoms of NS include:
- Proteinuria (‘leaking’ protein into the urine)
- Edema (swelling)
- Hypertension (increased blood pressure)
- Hypoproteinemia (low blood protein)
- Hypercholesterolemia (high cholesterol)

Someone who is experiencing these symptoms but has not had a kidney biopsy is diagnosed with Nephrotic Syndrome.

To learn more about what is causing a patient’s Nephrotic Syndrome, doctors may choose to perform a kidney biopsy. After a biopsy, a patient is usually diagnosed more specifically, based on what can be seen under the microscope. The most common diagnoses are:

- Focal Segmental Glomerulosclerosis (FSGS)
  Some sections of kidney filters show scarring.

- Minimal Change Disease
  Kidney tissue shows very little change from normal kidney tissue.

- Membranous Nephropathy
  Kidney tissue has a thicker than normal filtering barrier or glomerular basement membrane.

For more information, please visit www.NephCure.org