



# MDwise

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## Sickle Cell Disease: Splenic Sequestration

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### Overview

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Splenic sequestration is a problem with the spleen that can happen in people who have sickle cell disease.

It happens when a lot of sickled red blood cells get trapped in the spleen. The spleen can enlarge, get damaged, and not work as it should. When the spleen doesn't work well, a person is more likely to have serious, life-threatening infections with certain types of bacteria.

If splenic sequestration happens suddenly, it can be a life-threatening emergency.

### Those affected

This condition is more common in infants and young children who have sickle cell disease. It may follow a respiratory infection.

In older children and adults, the spleen often doesn't work because of years of damage from sickled cells.

### What are the symptoms?

Splenic sequestration causes sudden and severe anemia, with symptoms of sudden weakness, pale lips, rapid breathing, excessive thirst, belly pain, and rapid heartbeat. Splenic sequestration can happen in people who have sickle cell disease.

### Credits

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cross-references to other topics, definitions or medical illustrations) is only available in the online version.

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