**Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome**

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Easy bruising and bleeding are prominent features in heritable collagen disorders such as the Ehlers-Danlos syndromes (EDS), a heterogeneous group of diseases involving the skin, ligaments and joints, blood vessels and internal organs. Easy bruising is, to a variable degree, present in all subtypes of EDS, and is due to fragility of the capillaries and perivascular connective tissues. Haematological studies including evaluation of clotting factors, platelet aggregation and bleeding time are usually normal. Most EDS subtypes are caused by mutations in genes encoding fibrillar collagens, or in genes coding for enzymes involved in posttranslational modifications of collagens. In the vascular subtype of EDS, fragility of medium-sized and large arteries leads to spontaneous arterial rupture and premature death at young age. This condition is caused by mutations in COL3A1, encoding type III collagen, an important constituent in blood vessels and hollow organs. A wide spectrum of COL3A1 mutations has been characterised, however no clear genotype-phenotype correlations emerge. Vascular fragility has been associated also with specific mutations in type I collagen, causing an EDS-like phenotype, with type V collagen mutations in the classic EDS subtype, or with genetic defects of collagen modifying enzymes in some rare EDS variants. Accurate biochemical and molecular testing is now available for most EDS subtypes and can direct genetic counselling and medical management for these disorders.