**Disease Name –**

Urticaria (hives)

**Medical history related to Urticaria (hives)–**

Previous episodes of hives or allergic reactions. History of exposure to known allergens or triggers. Recent changes in medication or diet. Underlying medical conditions such as autoimmune diseases or infections

**Symptoms of Urticaria (hives) –**

Symptom 1 - Raised, Red or Pink Welts on the Skin: Urticaria, commonly known as hives, presents as raised, red or pink welts on the skin's surface. These welts can vary in size and shape, ranging from small dots to large patches. They may appear suddenly and migrate or change shape rapidly over minutes to hours. The raised appearance is due to the release of histamine and other inflammatory substances, causing blood vessels to dilate and fluid to accumulate in the skin's upper layers.

Symptom 2 - Itching or Burning Sensation in Affected Areas: Hives are often accompanied by intense itching or burning sensations in the affected areas. This itching sensation can be localized to the hives themselves or may spread to surrounding skin. The sensation of itching is caused by histamine and other inflammatory mediators released during the allergic reaction, which stimulate nerve endings in the skin, triggering the sensation of itchiness.

Symptom 3 - Swelling of the Skin, Lips, Eyes, or Throat: In addition to skin welts, urticaria can cause swelling, known as angioedema, affecting deeper layers of the skin or mucous membranes. This swelling can occur in various areas of the body, including the skin, lips, eyes, or throat. Swelling of the throat can be particularly concerning as it may lead to difficulty breathing, a potentially life-threatening emergency requiring immediate medical attention.

Symptom 4 - Rapid Onset and Resolution of Lesions: One characteristic feature of urticaria is its rapid onset and resolution of lesions. Hives can appear suddenly, often within minutes of exposure to a triggering factor, and may disappear just as quickly. Individual hives may last for a few minutes to hours before resolving, with new lesions potentially appearing in different areas of the body. This transient nature distinguishes urticaria from other skin conditions characterized by persistent lesions.

Symptom 5 - Potential Accompanying Symptoms: In severe cases of urticaria or angioedema, accompanying symptoms may include fever, nausea, or difficulty breathing. These symptoms suggest a more severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis, which requires immediate medical attention. Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening emergency characterized by a rapid onset of symptoms affecting multiple organ systems, including the skin, respiratory, cardiovascular, and gastrointestinal systems. Prompt recognition and treatment are essential to prevent serious complications and potentially fatal outcomes.

**Description of Urticaria (hives)–**

Urticaria, commonly known as hives, is a skin condition characterized by the sudden appearance of raised, red or pink welts on the skin. These welts may be small or large and can vary in shape and distribution. Urticaria is typically accompanied by itching or burning sensations and often resolves within hours. It can be acute, lasting for less than six weeks, or chronic, lasting for longer periods. Urticaria occurs due to the release of histamine and other inflammatory substances in response to triggers such as allergens, medications, infections, or physical stimuli like heat or pressure.

**Causes of Urticaria (hives)–**

Cause 1- Allergic triggers: Common allergens such as certain foods (e.g., nuts, shellfish, eggs), medications (e.g., antibiotics, aspirin), insect stings, latex, or environmental factors (e.g., pollen, pet dander) can trigger urticaria in susceptible individuals.

Cause 2- Non-allergic triggers: Urticaria can also be triggered by non-allergic factors such as viral or bacterial infections, stress, heat, cold, pressure, or sunlight exposure.

Cause 3- Autoimmune causes: Chronic urticaria may be associated with autoimmune conditions where the immune system mistakenly targets healthy cells in the skin, leading to inflammation and hives.

Cause 4- Physical stimuli: Physical urticaria refers to hives triggered by physical stimuli such as pressure (dermatographism), cold (cold urticaria), heat (heat urticaria), or friction (cholinergic urticaria).

**Lifestyle changes to prevent Urticaria (hives)–**

Preventing urticaria often involves identifying and avoiding triggers that induce hives. Individuals should keep a diary to track potential triggers and seek medical evaluation if a specific cause is suspected. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle with a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, and stress management can also help support immune function and reduce the risk of hives. Proper skincare and protection from environmental factors such as extreme temperatures or sun exposure may prevent physical urticaria. In cases of chronic urticaria, where triggers may be difficult to identify, working closely with a healthcare provider to develop an individualized treatment plan is essential.

**Disease background of Urticaria (hives) –**

Urticaria can affect individuals of all ages, races, and genders. While acute urticaria is common and often resolves spontaneously, chronic urticaria can significantly impact quality of life and may require ongoing management. Individuals with a history of allergies, autoimmune diseases, or frequent exposure to potential triggers are at higher risk of developing urticaria. Prompt recognition and management of severe allergic reactions or anaphylaxis, which can sometimes accompany urticaria, are critical to prevent life-threatening complications.