

# Proteinuria, Hematuria & Glomerular Disease

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# DISCLOSURES

**Please state any/all financial disclosures for past 24 months.**

*Scientific Advisory Board: Vera Therapeutics, Travers Therapeutics*



# Learning Objectives:

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Workup of hematuria and proteinuria

Mechanisms and etiologies of glomerular disease

Correlate presentations to workup of glomerular disease



# Hematuria

| Glomerular                     | Structural                                     | Systemic                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| IgA nephropathy                | RCC, Prostate Ca, Stone                        | Anticoagulant or antiplatelet therapy |
| ANCA vasculitis                | Pyelonephritis/cystitis/prostatitis/urethritis | Coagulopathy/bleeding disorder        |
| Lupus nephritis                | Ureteral or urethral stricture                 | Sickle cell trait/disease             |
| Anti-GBM disease               | Benign prostatic hyperplasia                   | Renal infarction (embolic/thrombotic) |
| Post-infectious GN             | Polycystic kidney disease                      | Pelvic radiation (radiation cystitis) |
| Alport syndrome                | Arteriovenous malformation                     | Renal/pelvic trauma/Instrumentation   |
| Thin basement membrane disease | Papillary necrosis                             | Exercise-induced (march) hematuria    |
|                                | Schistosomiasis                                | Loin pain–hematuria syndrome          |



# Pseudohematuria (-Dipstick/No RBCs)

## **Dietary Sources**

- Beets (beeturia)
- Blackberries
- Rhubarb
- Foods with synthetic red/pink dyes

## **Medications**

- Phenazopyridine (urinary analgesic)
- Rifampin (antibiotic)
- Phenytoin
- Chloroquine
- Deferoxamine
- Laxatives containing senna

## **Metabolic & Endogenous Factors**

- Porphyria (can result in wine-colored urine)
- Alkaptonuria (urine turns black upon standing)
- High concentrations of urates



# RBCs vs Hemoglobin vs Myoglobin

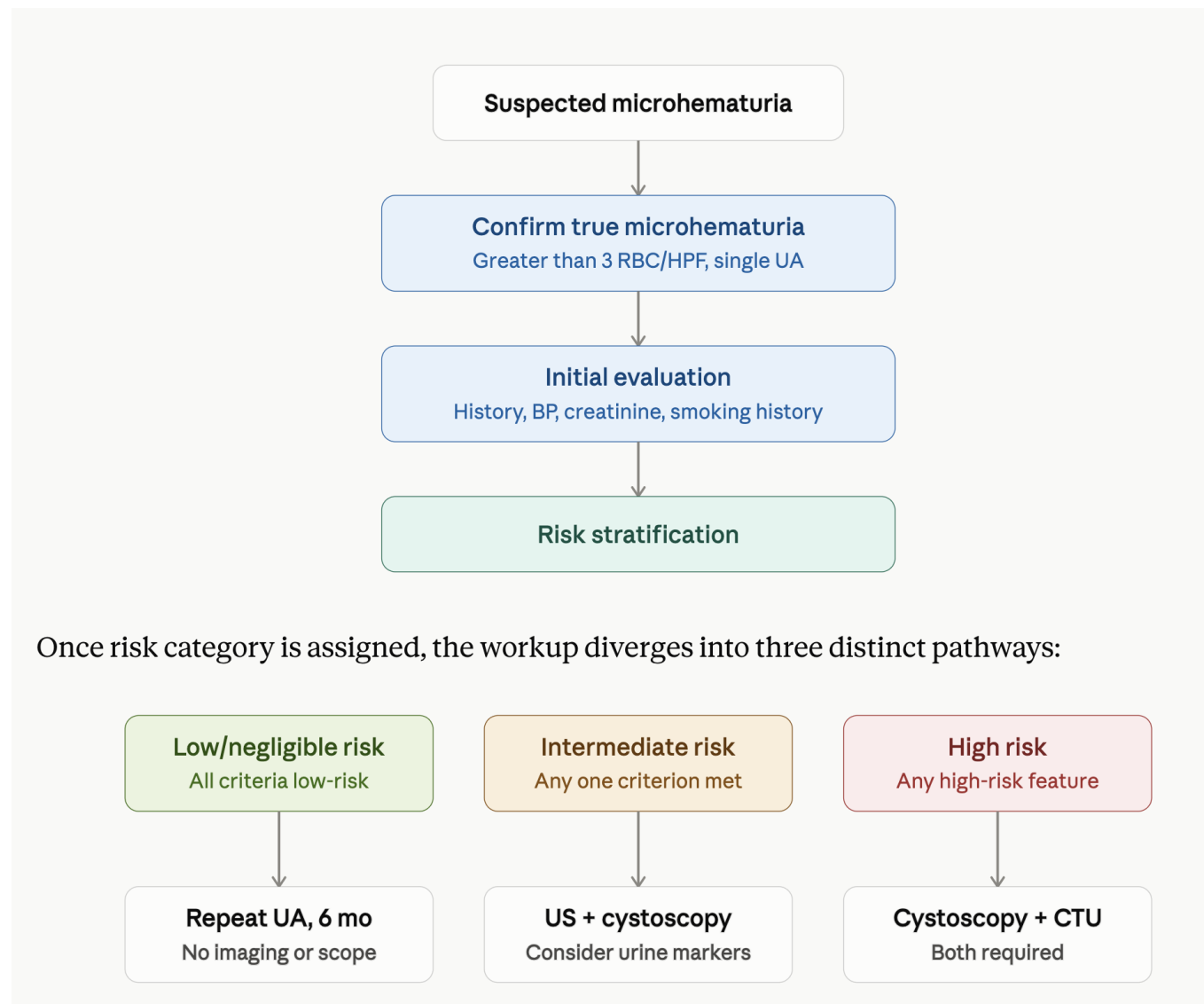
|                          | Hematuria                                                           | Hemoglobinuria                                                                                                             | Myoglobinuria                                                                               |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Dipstick</b>          | Positive for blood                                                  | Positive for blood                                                                                                         | Positive for blood                                                                          |
| <b>Urine microscopy</b>  | <b>RBCs present (&gt;3/HPF)</b>                                     | No RBCs (or rare)                                                                                                          | No RBCs (or rare)                                                                           |
| <b>Centrifuged urine</b> | Sediment red, <b>supernatant clear/yellow</b>                       | Sediment clear, supernatant red/pink                                                                                       | Sediment clear, supernatant red/brown                                                       |
| <b>Centrifuged serum</b> | Clear (normal color)                                                | <b>Pink/red (hemolyzed)</b>                                                                                                | Clear (normal color)                                                                        |
| <b>Serum haptoglobin</b> | Normal                                                              | <b>Low/decreased</b>                                                                                                       | Normal                                                                                      |
| <b>CK</b>                | Normal                                                              | Normal                                                                                                                     | <b>Markedly elevated</b>                                                                    |
| <b>Causes</b>            | Glomerular disease, stones, tumors, infection, trauma, coagulopathy | Intravascular hemolysis: hemolytic anemia, transfusion reaction, G6PD deficiency, malaria, mechanical heart valve, TTP/HUS | Rhabdomyolysis: crush injury, extreme exertion, statins, seizures, prolonged immobilization |



# Hematuria risk stratification

|                    | Low/negligible<br>(0–0.4%) | Intermediate<br>(0.2–3.1%)         | High<br>(1.3–6.3%)                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Criteria needed    | <b>All</b> must apply      | <b>Any one</b> applies             | <b>Any one</b> applies                        |
| RBC/HPF            | 3–10                       | 11–25 or<br>Persistent low risk MH | >25, or history of gross hematuria            |
| Age                | Women <60, men <40         | Women ≥60, men 40–59               | Men ≥60<br>(women not high-risk by age alone) |
| Smoking            | Never or <10 pack-yrs      | 10–30 pack-yrs                     | >30 pack-yrs                                  |
| Other risk factors | None                       | Any                                | One or more, plus a high-risk feature         |





# Hematuria Evaluation – Take Home

**Confirm first** → 3 RBC/HPF on a single, properly collected UA before proceeding.

**Risk-stratify** — low, intermediate, or high; low-risk requires meeting *all* criteria.

**Low risk** → repeat UA at 6 months; no imaging or cystoscopy yet.

**Intermediate risk** → ultrasound + cystoscopy; urine markers can help defer the scope.

**High risk** → cystoscopy + CT urography, both required.

**Hereditary risk overrides category** — RCC family history, genetic syndromes, or Lynch syndrome need upper tract imaging regardless of risk tier.

**Markers are adjuncts, not screens** — not routine for low or high risk, and not routine after a normal cystoscopy.

**Think glomerular?** — dysmorphic RBCs, casts, or proteinuria mean nephrology referral, not this pathway.



# Proteinuria

Normal excretion <150 mg/24 h

- 60% is filtered plasma protein (20-40 mg of albumin)
- 40% are glycoproteins -- Immunoglobulins, uromodulin

Detected by urine dipsticks (**specific to albumin**)

- Detects >10-15 mg/dL; almost always (+) if urine alb > 30 mg/dL

Moderately increased = 30-300 mg/24h

Severely increased = >300 mg/24h

Estimate protein (and albumin) excretion by measuring the ratio of protein to creatinine (to account for urine volume)

Proteinuria is one of the best predictors of progression of renal disease



# Dipstick vs SSA

| Comparison of Semi-Quantitative Urine Protein Detection Scales                    |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                    |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. URINE DIPSTICK (Albumin-Specific) - Semi-Quantitative Scale                    |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                    |                                                                                     | 2. SULFOSALICYLIC ACID (SSA) TEST (Total Protein) - Semi-Quantitative Scale         |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| NEGATIVE / TRACE                                                                  | 1+                                                                                | 2+                                                                                | 3+                                                                                 | 4+                                                                                  | NEGATIVE                                                                            | TRACE                                                                               | 1+                                                                                  | 2+                                                                                  | 3+                                                                                  | 4+                                                                                  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <10-15 mg/dL                                                                      | 30-100 mg/dL                                                                      | 100-300 mg/dL                                                                     | 300-1000 mg/dL                                                                     | >1000 mg/dL                                                                         | Clear solution<br><5 mg/dL                                                          | Perceptible turbidity<br>5-20 mg/dL                                                 | Distinct haze / granulation<br>20-50 mg/dL                                          | Flocculation / cloudiness<br>50-200 mg/dL                                           | Dense precipitate<br>200-500 mg/dL                                                  | Solid clump<br>>500 mg/dL                                                           |

**Dipstick** uses a pH-indicator dye (tetrabromophenol blue) that changes color only when it binds **albumin**. It's fast and convenient, but structurally blind to other proteins.

**SSA** works by a completely different principle — sulfosalicylic acid denatures and precipitates **any** protein in solution (albumin, globulins, and immunoglobulin light chains), read out as turbidity rather than color.

# Proteinuria Pearls

- Very high (or low) creatinine production can change the protein estimation as the formula assumes 1g creatinine production daily
- LMW proteins are usually absorbed in the proximal tubule so a high ratio of total protein to albumin may suggest either over-production of light chains (myeloma) or a proximal tubular disorder
- There is large intra-individual variation in the albumin/creatinine ratio even in a single day



# Tubular Proteinuria

- Results from **impaired proximal tubular reabsorption** of normally filtered low-molecular-weight proteins ( $\beta$ 2-microglobulin, retinol-binding protein) rather than glomerular damage
- Typically **mild** — usually <1-2 g/day, rarely nephrotic-range
- Causes: ATN, interstitial nephritis, Fanconi syndrome, heavy metal toxicity, drug-induced tubular injury, reflux nephropathy
- Urine protein electrophoresis shows predominance of low-molecular-weight proteins rather than albumin
- Often accompanied by other proximal tubular dysfunction: glucosuria (with normal serum glucose), aminoaciduria, phosphaturia

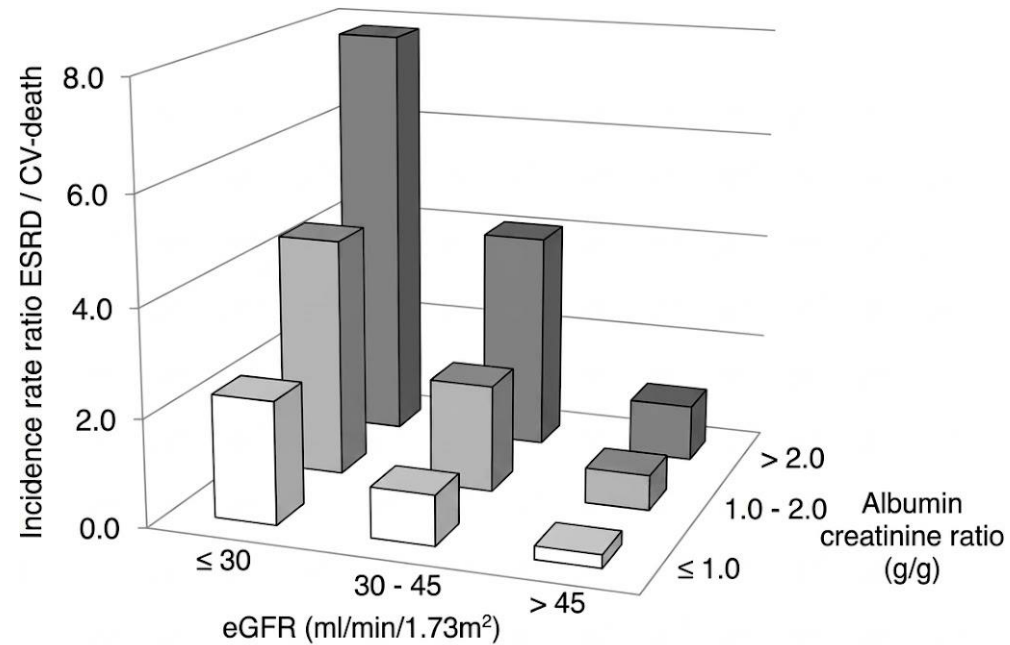


# Orthostatic Proteinuria

- Proteinuria that occurs only in the **upright position** and normalizes when supine - a benign condition
- Most common in adolescents and young adults, often incidentally found on routine screening
- Usually <1g/day
- Diagnosed by comparing a first-morning urine sample (after overnight recumbency) to a daytime sample: first-morning is protein-negative or minimal, daytime shows proteinuria. Or Split 12-hour collections.
- Typically mild, non-progressive, with normal renal function, no hematuria
- Usually resolves spontaneously with age; no treatment needed, just periodic monitoring to confirm it stays benign



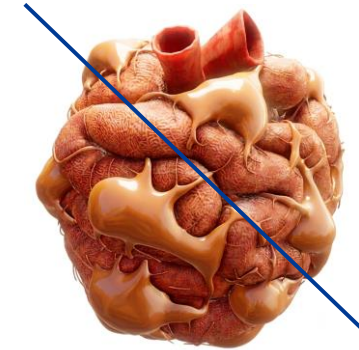
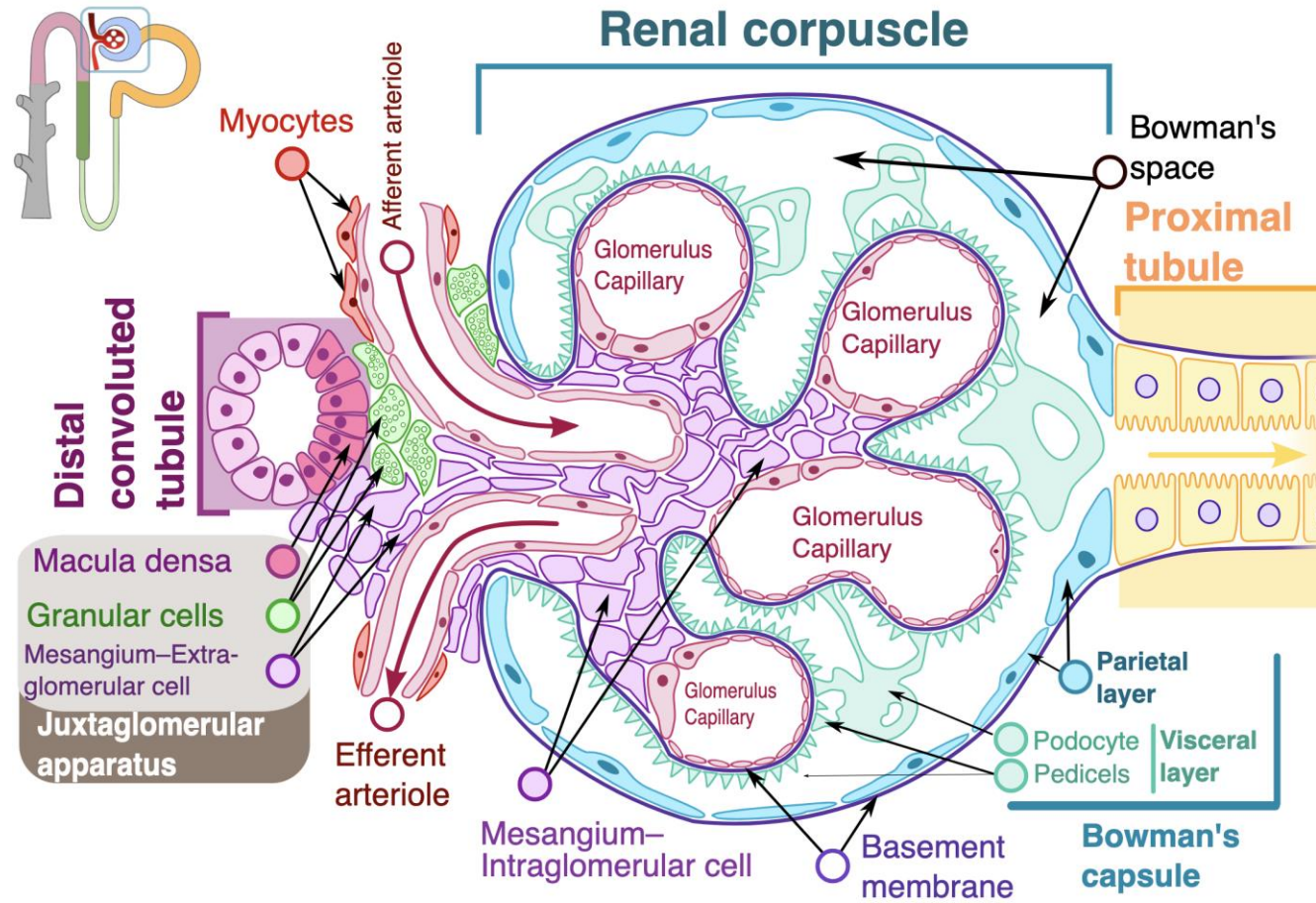
# Risk for ESRD increases as proteinuria increases and GFR decreases



|           |           | eGFR (ml/min/1.73m <sup>2</sup> ) |                      |                      |
|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|           |           | ≤30                               | 30 - 45              | >45                  |
| ACR (g/g) | > 2.0     | 12.87<br>(5.97-27.74)             | 7.46<br>(3.63-15.33) | 7.40<br>(3.32-16.47) |
|           | 1.0 - 2.0 | 7.12<br>(3.16-16.04)              | 3.47<br>(1.63-7.40)  | 2.80<br>(1.18-6.64)  |
|           | ≤1.0      | 3.61<br>(1.49-8.73)               | 1.49<br>(0.64-3.48)  | 1.00<br>(reference)  |



# Glomerulus Structure



# The Glomerulus: Where Injury Drives Presentation

## Functional structures

- Capillary tuft — site of filtration
- Mesangium — structural support
- Glomerular basement membrane (GBM)
- Podocytes — visceral epithelial cells
- Bowman's capsule — parietal epithelium

## Site of injury → syndrome

|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Endothelial / mesangial | <b>Nephritic</b>        |
| Podocyte                | <b>Nephrotic</b>        |
| GBM (immune)            | <b>Nephritic / RPGN</b> |
| Crescentic (any cause)  | <b>RPGN — emergency</b> |



# Four Presentations of Glomerular Disease

**Nephrotic**

**Nephritic**

**RPGN**

**Asymptomatic urinary abnormalities**



# Four Presentations of Glomerular Disease

## Nephrotic

Proteinuria >3.5 g/day · albumin <3.0 · edema · hyperlipidemia

## Nephritic

Hematuria + RBC casts · HTN · moderate proteinuria · ↑ Cr

## RPGN

≥50% eGFR decline in days–weeks · crescents on biopsy

## Asymptomatic urinary abnormalities

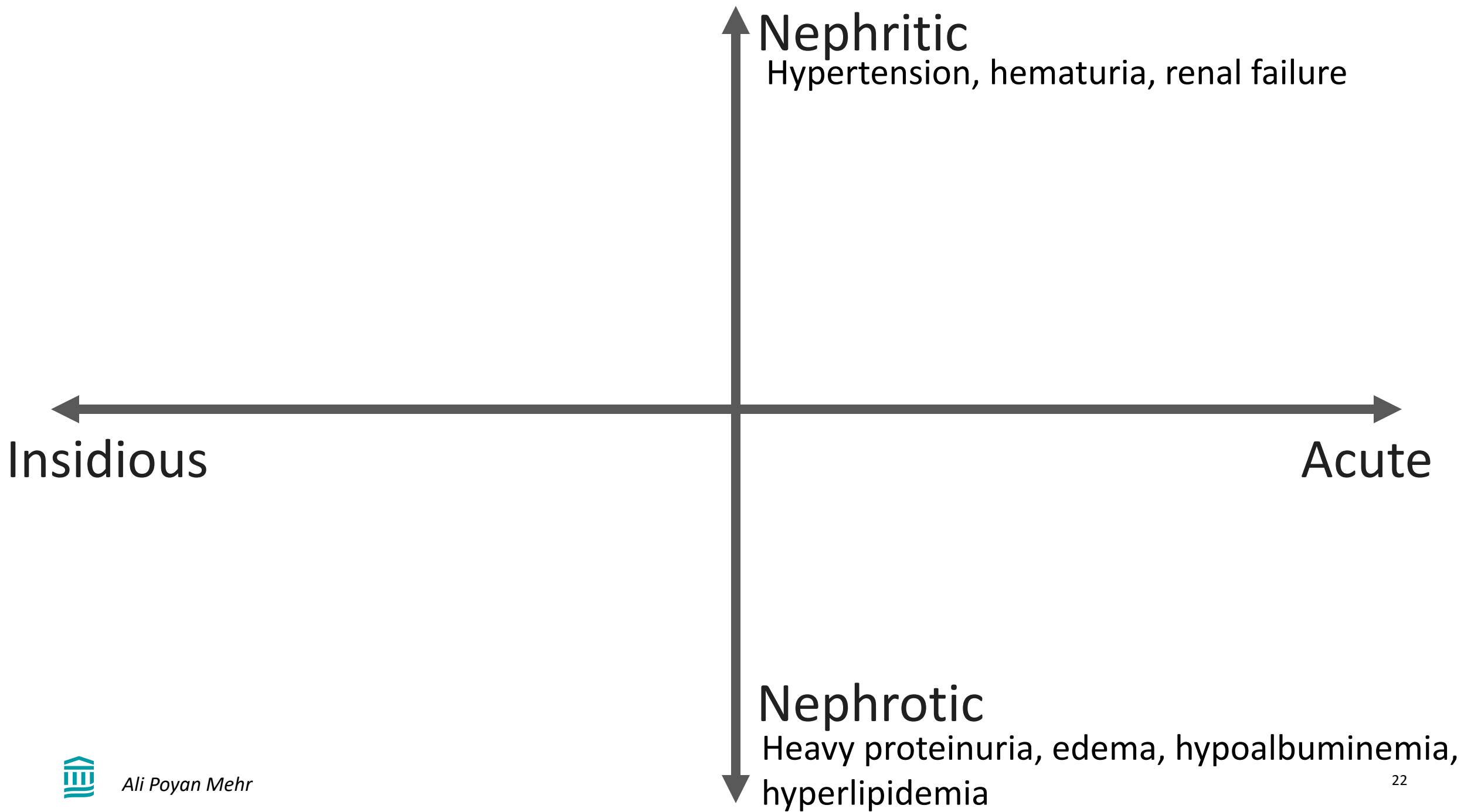
Incidental hematuria and/or proteinuria · most common presentation

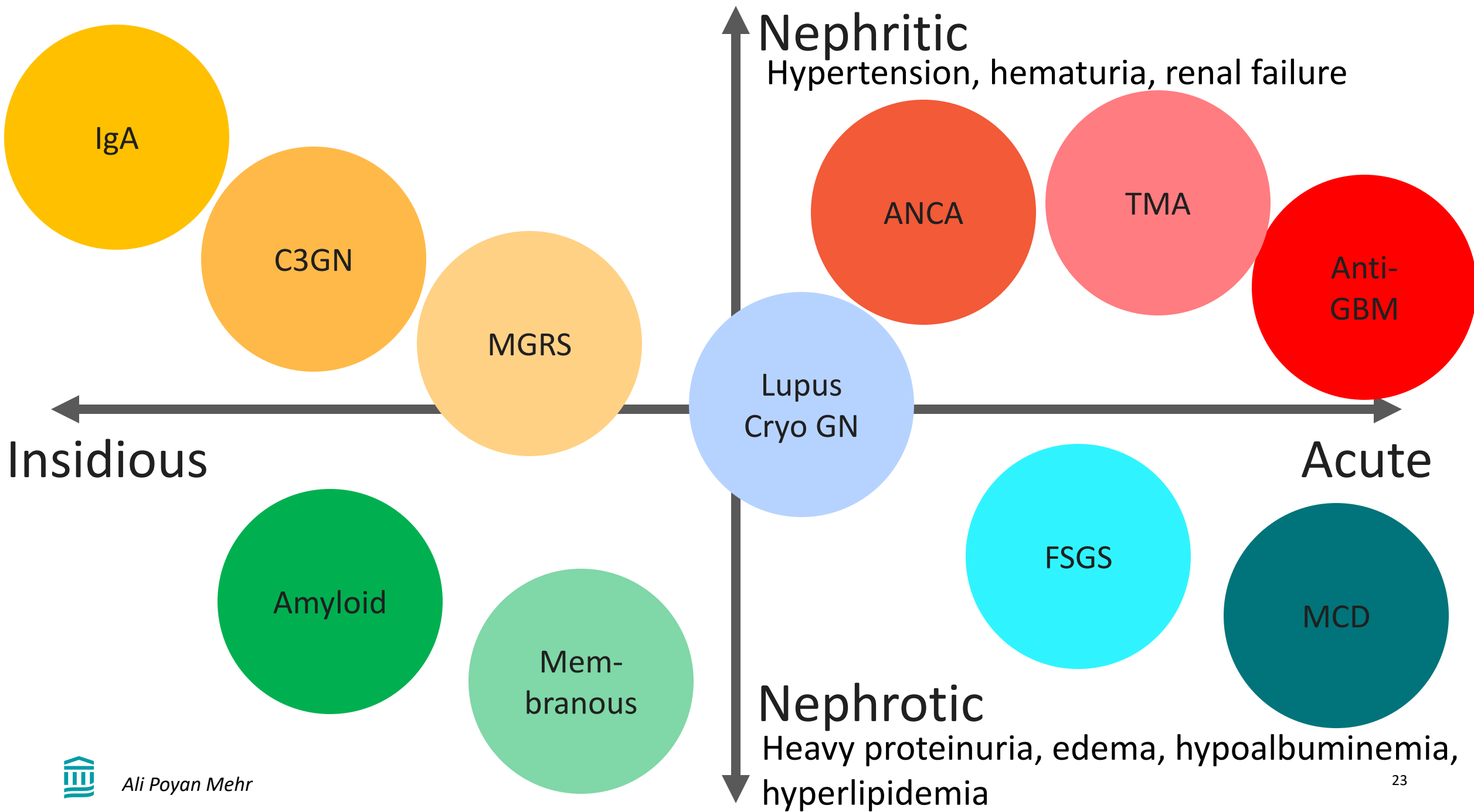


# Glomerular Disease: Clinical syndromes

|                    | Nephrotic  | Nephritic       |
|--------------------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Edema</b>       | +++++      | ++              |
| <b>BP</b>          | Normal     | Raised          |
| <b>JVP</b>         | Normal/Low | Raised          |
| <b>Proteinuria</b> | +++++      | ++              |
| <b>Hematuria</b>   | +/-        | +++             |
| <b>RBC Casts</b>   | Absent     | Present         |
| <b>Albumin</b>     | <3.0g/dL   | Normal/Slight ↓ |







# Four Presentations of Glomerular Disease

## Nephrotic

Proteinuria >3.5 g/day · albumin <3.0 · edema · hyperlipidemia

### Classic causes

*MCD, FSGS, membranous, diabetic, amyloid*

## Nephritic

Hematuria + RBC casts · HTN · moderate proteinuria · ↑ Cr

### Classic causes

*IgAN, post-infectious GN, lupus nephritis*

## RPGN

≥50% eGFR decline in days–weeks · crescents on biopsy

### Classic causes

*ANCA vasculitis, anti-GBM, immune-complex*

## Asymptomatic urinary abnormalities

Incidental hematuria and/or proteinuria · most common presentation

### Classic causes

*Thin basement membrane, mild IgAN, early disease*





# Start With the Urine

*Urinalysis & sediment is the single most important first test.*

## On the dipstick & sediment

- Dysmorphic RBCs → glomerular bleeding
- RBC casts → pathognomonic
- Heavy proteinuria → podocyte disease
- Lipiduria, oval fat bodies → nephrotic
- WBC casts → interstitial nephritis (not GN)

## Quantifying proteinuria

- Spot UPCR (g/g) — fast, well-validated
- 24-hour urine — gold standard but cumbersome
- Nephrotic range = >3.5 g/day (UPCR >3.5)
- First morning specimen reduces orthostatic noise



# Send the Full Serologic Panel — Upfront

## **C3 / C4**

Low C3+C4 → lupus, cryo.  
Low C3 only → post-infectious, C3GN, MPGN

## **Hep B, Hep C, HIV**

Secondary GN, MPGN pattern, HCV-cryoglobulinemia

## **ANA, anti-dsDNA**

Lupus nephritis

## **SPEP / SFLC**

Patients >50 — exclude monoclonal gammopathy

## **ANCA (MPO, PR3)**

Pauci-immune crescentic GN

## **ASO / anti-DNase B**

Post-streptococcal GN

## **Anti-GBM**

Anti-GBM disease / Goodpasture

## **Cryoglobulins, RF**

Cryoglobulinemic GN (often with HCV)

## **Anti-PLA2R**

Primary membranous nephropathy

## **CBC, CMP, UA**

Always — establishes baseline and severity



# Kidney Biopsy: The Gold Standard

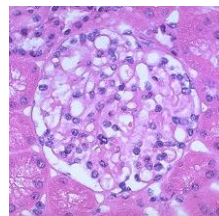
## What the biopsy answers

- Etiology — via immunofluorescence pattern
- Severity — pattern and extent of injury
- Chronicity — degree of sclerosis & fibrosis
- Prognosis — guides aggressiveness of therapy

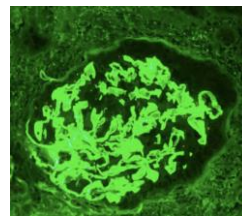
## When to biopsy

- Adult-onset nephrotic syndrome
- Hematuria + proteinuria >0.5 g/day
- Unexplained AKI without obvious cause
- Any RPGN
- Serologic workup inconclusive

*Generally avoided: longstanding diabetic with retinopathy + slow progressive proteinuria — clinical diagnosis usually suffices.*



Light  
microscopy



Immunofluorescence



Electron  
microscopy

# Pathogenesis-Based Classification (by IF)

| # | Category          | IF / mechanism                            | Examples                                                    |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Immune-complex GN | Granular polyclonal Ig deposits           | <i>IgA nephropathy, lupus nephritis, post-infectious GN</i> |
| 2 | Pauci-immune      | Little or no Ig staining; ANCA-associated | <i>GPA, MPA, EGPA</i>                                       |
| 3 | Anti-GBM          | Linear IgG along GBM                      | <i>Anti-GBM disease, Goodpasture</i>                        |
| 4 | Monoclonal Ig GN  | Monoclonal heavy/light chain deposits     | <i>PGNMID, MIDD</i>                                         |
| 5 | C3 glomerulopathy | Complement-dominant, Ig-negative          | <i>C3GN</i>                                                 |



# Nephrotic Syndrome

## Defining features

- Proteinuria  $>3.5$  g/24 hr (or UPCR  $>3.5$ )
- Serum albumin  $<3.0$  g/dL
- Peripheral edema, often anasarca
- Hyperlipidemia
- Bland sediment (no RBC casts)

## Mechanism

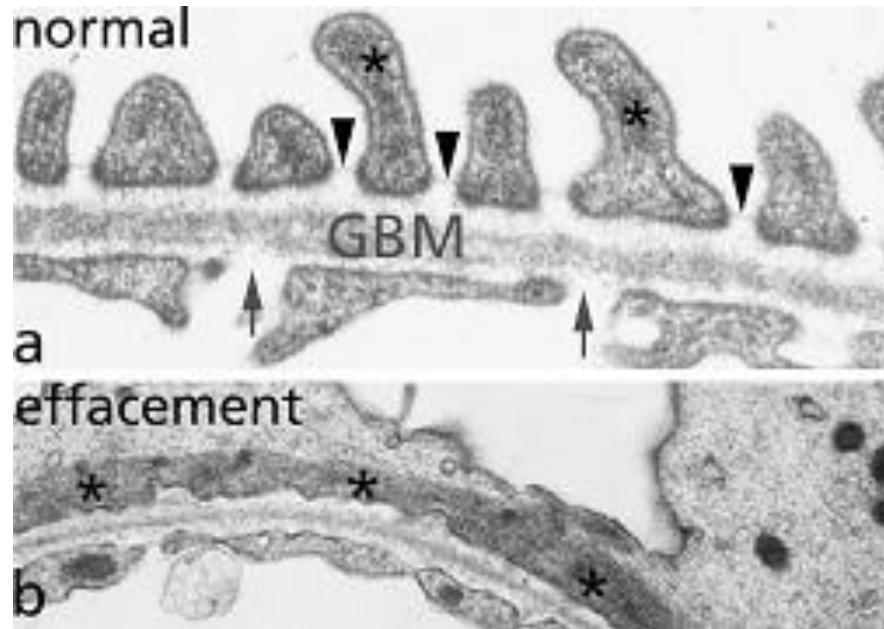
Podocyte injury  $\rightarrow$  loss of size/charge selectivity  $\rightarrow$  massive albumin loss.

## Classic causes by epidemiology

- Children  $\rightarrow$  minimal change disease
- Adults (white)  $\rightarrow$  membranous nephropathy
- Adults (Black)  $\rightarrow$  FSGS
- All adults  $\rightarrow$  diabetic nephropathy, amyloid



# Nephrotic Syndrome



# Nephrotic Syndrome

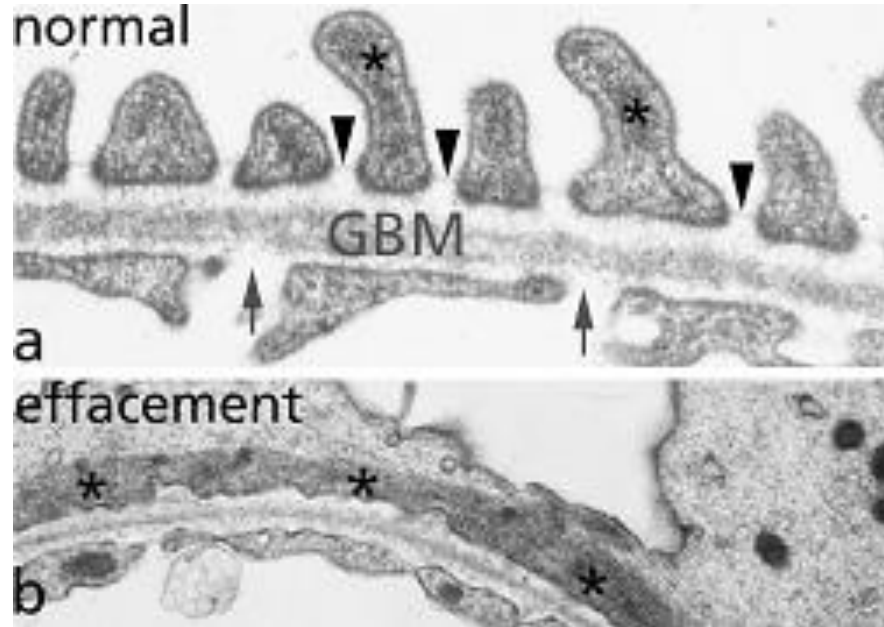


Normal  
Podocytes



Effaced  
Podocytes

# Nephrotic Syndrome

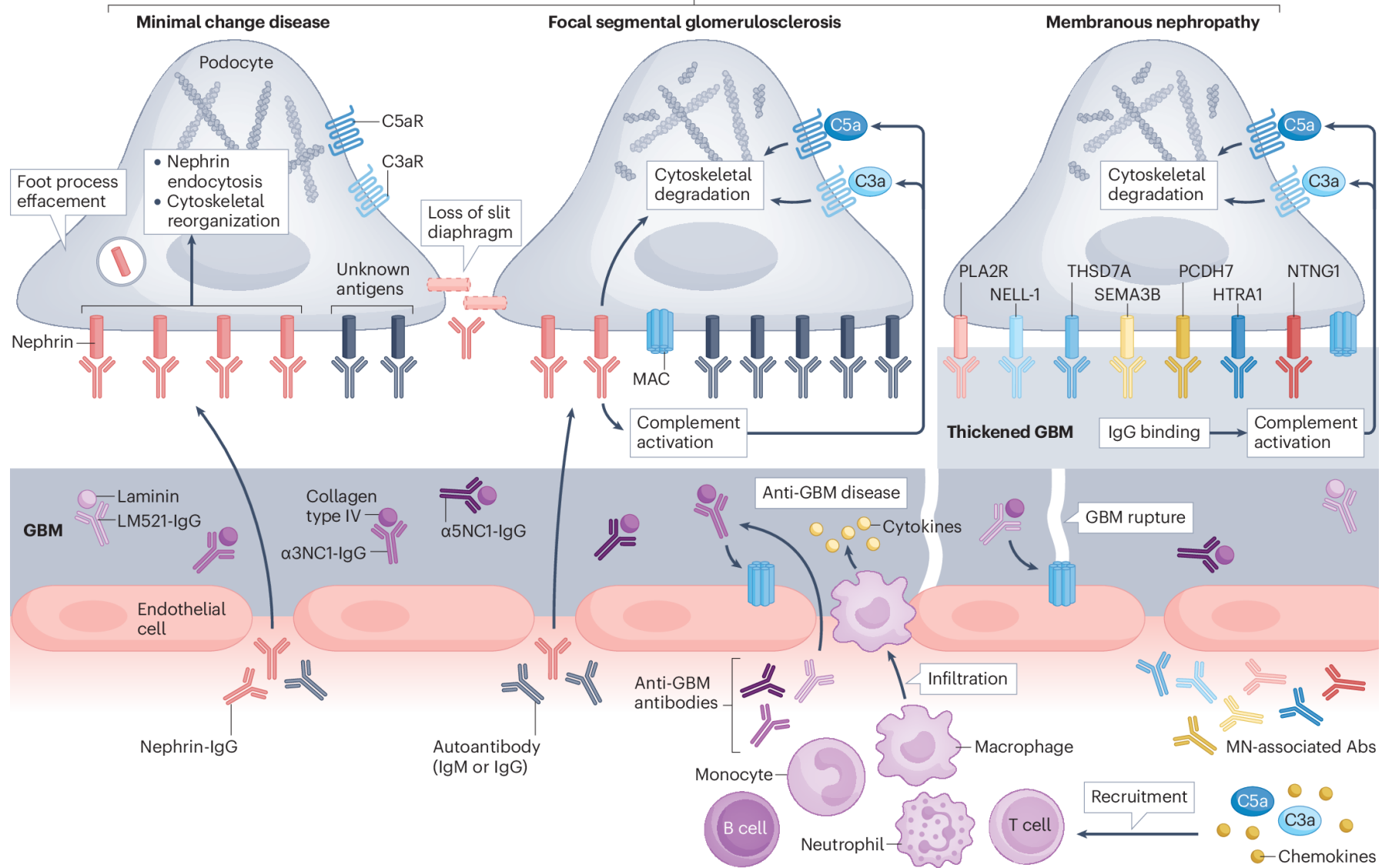


Immunogenic

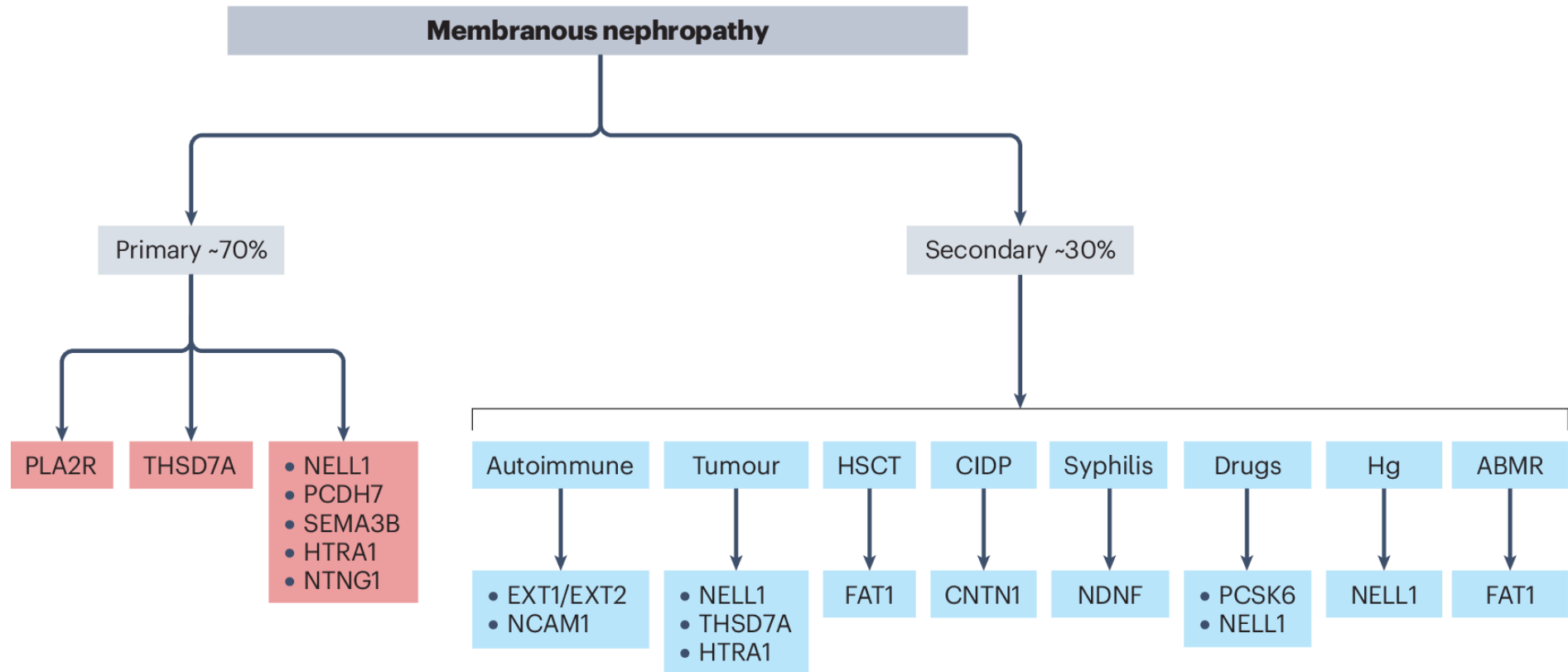
Non-immunogenic



# Kidney-specific immune-mediated diseases



# Membranous Nephropathy (Causes)



| Minimal Change Disease                                              | FSGS                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NSAIDs and other drugs (interferon, lithium, gold, bisphosphonates) | Heroin nephropathy and other drugs (interferon, anabolic steroids, pamidronate/bisphosphonates)                             |
| Hodgkin lymphoma and other lymphoproliferative disorders            | Viral infections: HIV, parvovirus B19, CMV, SARS-CoV-2 (COVAN)                                                              |
| Allergic reactions / bee sting, food allergy                        | Obesity / adaptive hyperfiltration                                                                                          |
| Graft-versus-host disease (post-transplant)                         | Reduced nephron mass (renal agenesis, reflux nephropathy, low birth weight, prior nephrectomy, reflux/obstructive uropathy) |
|                                                                     | Sickle cell disease, Chronic vesicoureteral reflux                                                                          |
|                                                                     | Genetic podocyte gene mutations (e.g., NPHS1/nephrin, NPHS2/podocin, ACTN4, TRPC6, INF2)                                    |
|                                                                     | APOL1 high-risk genotype (especially in individuals of West African ancestry)                                               |
|                                                                     | <i>Chronic scarring from any prior glomerular injury ("secondary FSGS" as a common final scarring pathway)</i>              |



# Nephritic Syndrome

## Defining features

- Hematuria with dysmorphic RBCs
- RBC casts (pathognomonic for glomerular bleeding)
- Subnephrotic proteinuria
- Hypertension, oliguria, edema
- Rising creatinine

## Mechanism

Endocapillary or mesangial inflammation → leakage of RBCs and protein → ↓ filtration.

## Classic causes

- IgA nephropathy (most common worldwide)
- Post-infectious GN (post-strep classic)
- Lupus nephritis
- MPGN pattern (cryoglobulinemia, HCV)



# Rapidly Progressive Glomerulonephritis (RPGN)

**Nephrologic emergency — initiate workup and consult same day**

## Definition

≥50% decline in eGFR over days to weeks. Histologic hallmark = crescent formation in Bowman's space.

### ANCA-associated

Pauci-immune crescentic GN. MPO or PR3. Adults, often elderly.

### Anti-GBM

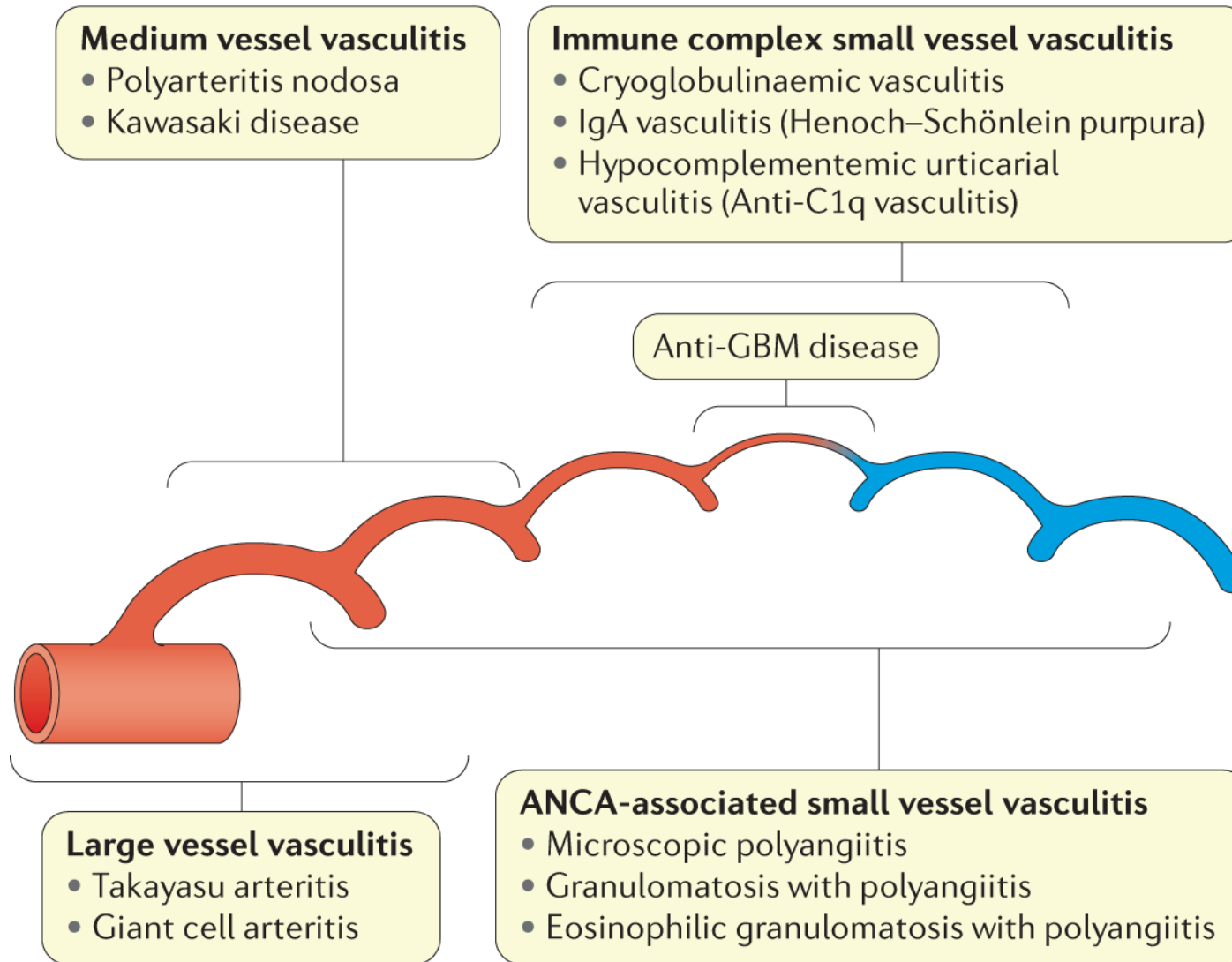
Linear IgG along GBM. ± alveolar hemorrhage (Goodpasture).

### Immune-complex

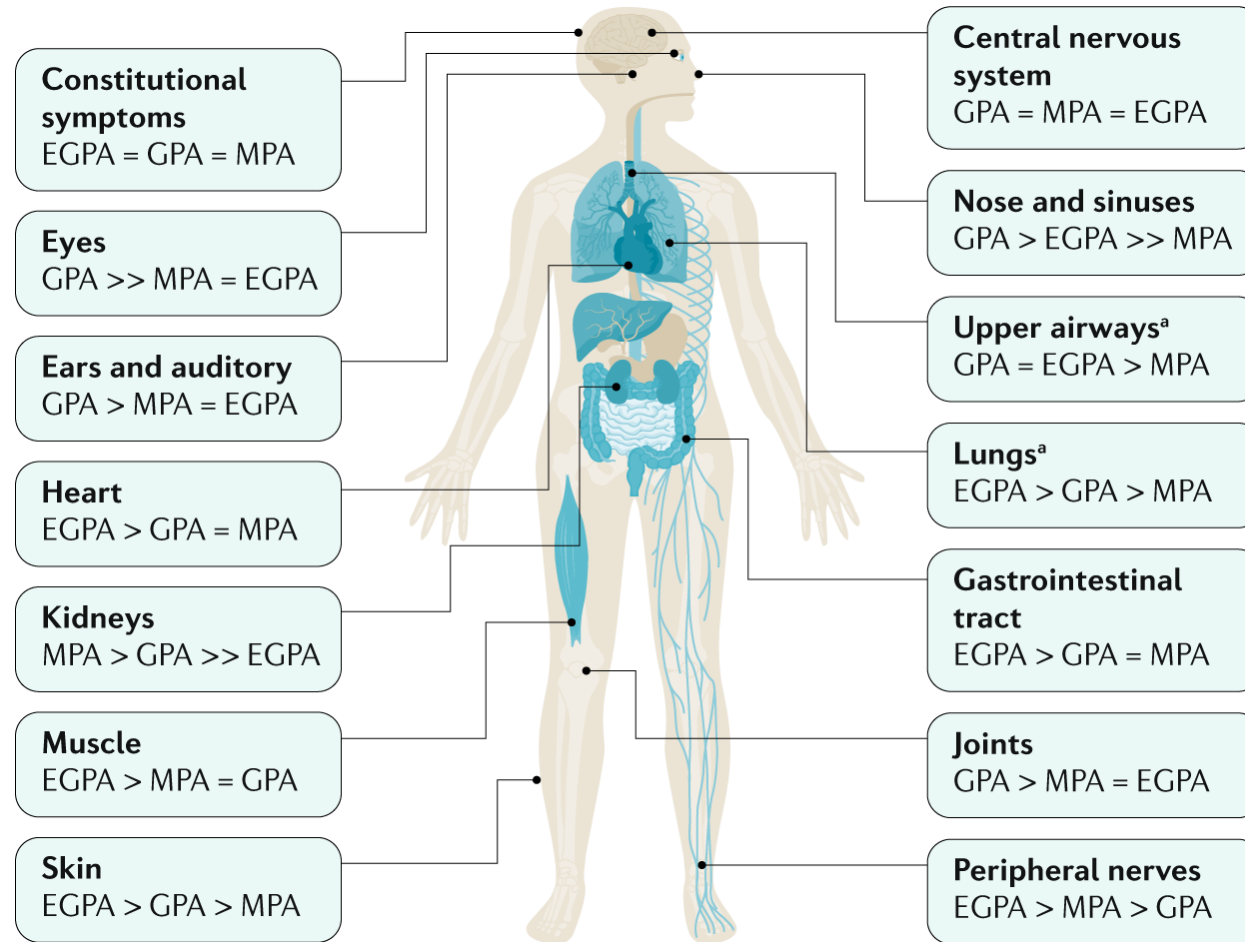
IgA, lupus, post-infectious, cryo, MPGN can all crescent.



# ANCA



# ANCA



granulomatosis with polyangiitis (GPA), microscopic polyangiitis (MPA) and eosinophilic GPA (EGPA).

| Feature                          | ANCA Vasculitis                                                                          | Anti-GBM Disease                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Antibody target</b>           | Proteinase-3 (PR3) or myeloperoxidase (MPO) in neutrophils                               | Type IV collagen ( $\alpha$ 3 chain) in glomerular/alveolar basement membrane                           |
| <b>Biopsy pattern</b>            | Pauci-immune (little/no immune deposits)                                                 | Linear IgG deposition along GBM                                                                         |
| <b>Systemic involvement</b>      | Multi-organ — sinuses, lungs, skin, nerves, eyes, GI (GPA, MPA, EGPA subtypes)           | Largely limited to kidney and lung ("Goodpasture syndrome" when both involved)                          |
| <b>Course</b>                    | Often relapsing-remitting                                                                | Typically monophasic — one acute episode, less prone to relapse once treated                            |
| <b>Age/epidemiology</b>          | Wider age range, often older adults                                                      | Bimodal: young adults (often with lung hemorrhage, smokers) and older adults (renal-limited)            |
| <b>Other clues</b>               | Sinusitis, nodules, mononeuritis multiplex, cavitary lung lesions, saddle-nose deformity | Isolated pulmonary-renal presentation, strong smoking/hydrocarbon exposure link for alveolar hemorrhage |
| <b>Prognosis without overlap</b> | Renal recovery more likely if caught early                                               | Renal recovery poor once dialysis-dependent or with high % crescents                                    |





# IgA Nephropathy

*Most common immune-mediated GN worldwide.*

## Presentation

- Young adults, mean age 34–45
- Synpharyngitic hematuria (Few d post-URI)
- Asymptomatic micro to RPGN across spectrum
- Up to 50% progress to ESKD by 10 years

## Treatment — KDIGO 2025

- BP target  $\leq 120/70$  · RAS blockade or sparsentan
- SGLT2 inhibitors, ERA
- Anti APRIL/BAFF biologics, budesonide
- Complement inhibitors (iptacopan)
- Avoid systemic steroids in most patients



# Lupus Nephritis

*50% of patients with Lupus*

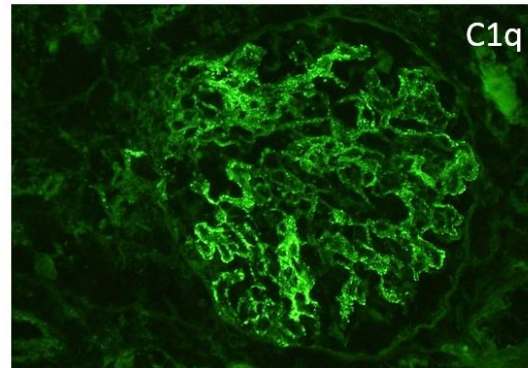
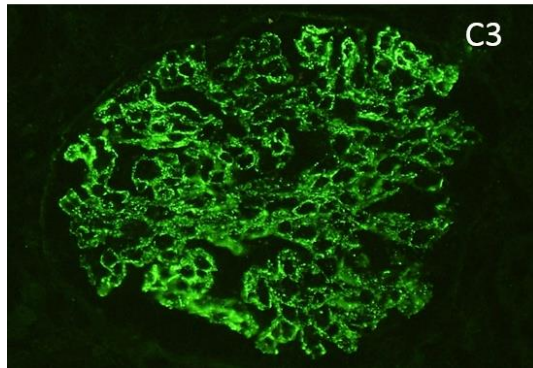
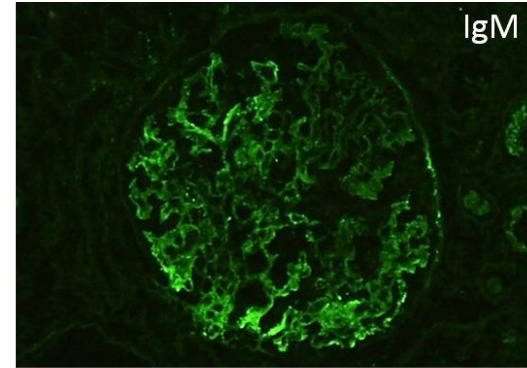
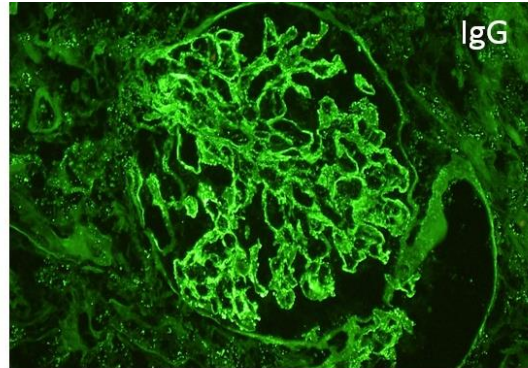
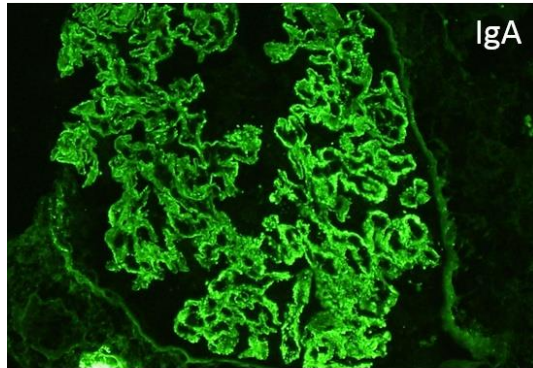
*Full House IF pattern*

*Class drives treatment. Proliferative classes (III/IV) demand aggressive immunosuppression.*

|            |                         |                                           |
|------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>I</b>   | Minimal mesangial       | Observation; supportive                   |
| <b>II</b>  | Mesangial proliferative | Supportive ± low-dose steroid             |
| <b>III</b> | Focal proliferative     | Induction + maintenance immunosuppression |
| <b>IV</b>  | Diffuse proliferative   | Induction + maintenance immunosuppression |
| <b>V</b>   | Membranous              | Treat if nephrotic-range proteinuria      |
| <b>VI</b>  | Advanced sclerosing     | Supportive; prepare for KRT               |



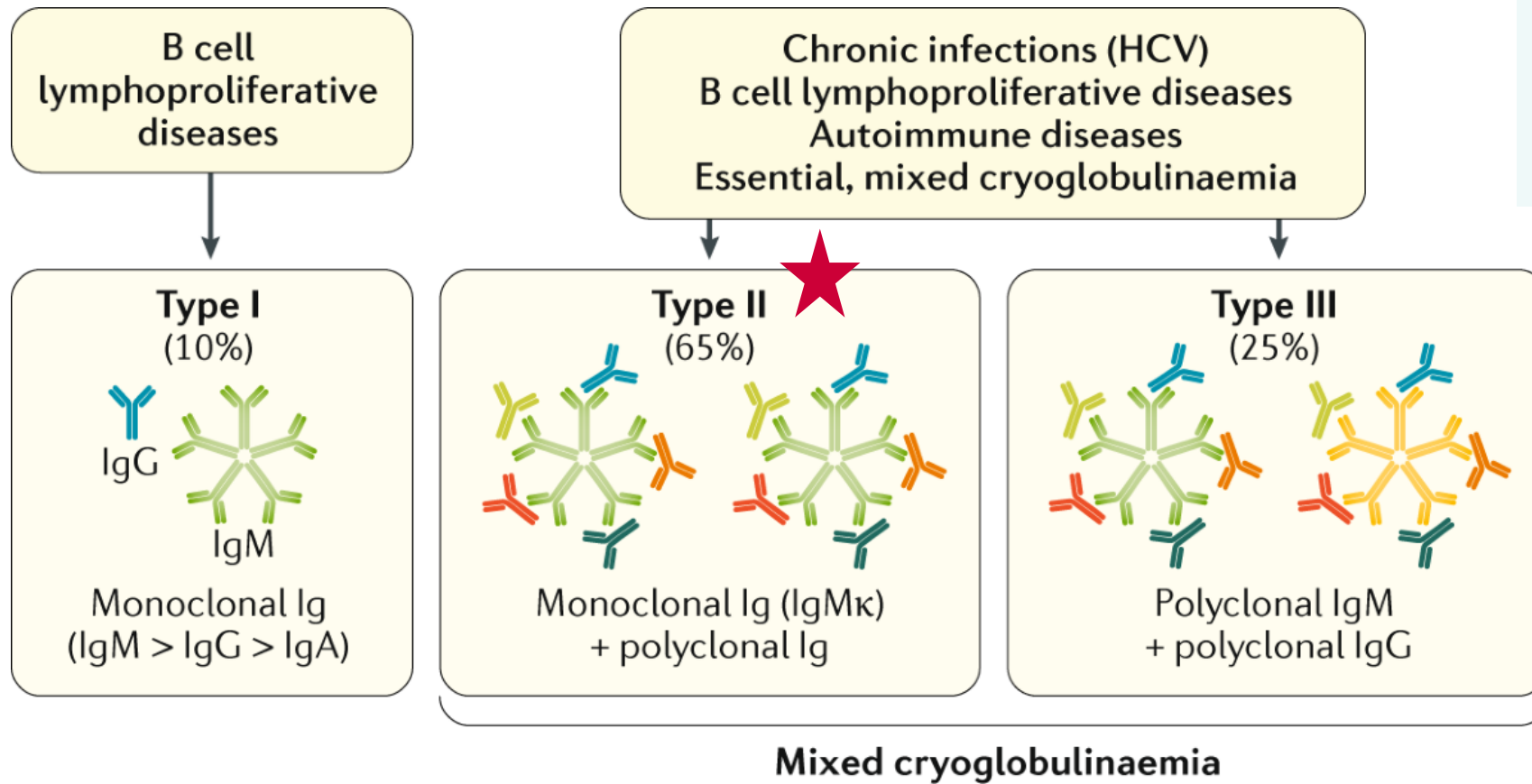
# Lupus Nephritis: 'Full House'



"Full house"  
immunofluorescence in a case  
of diffuse lupus nephritis.

 **Arkana**  
Laboratories

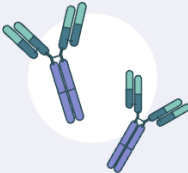
# Cryoglobulinemic Vasculitis



**Meltzer's triad:**  
Palpable purpura  
Arthralgia  
Weakness

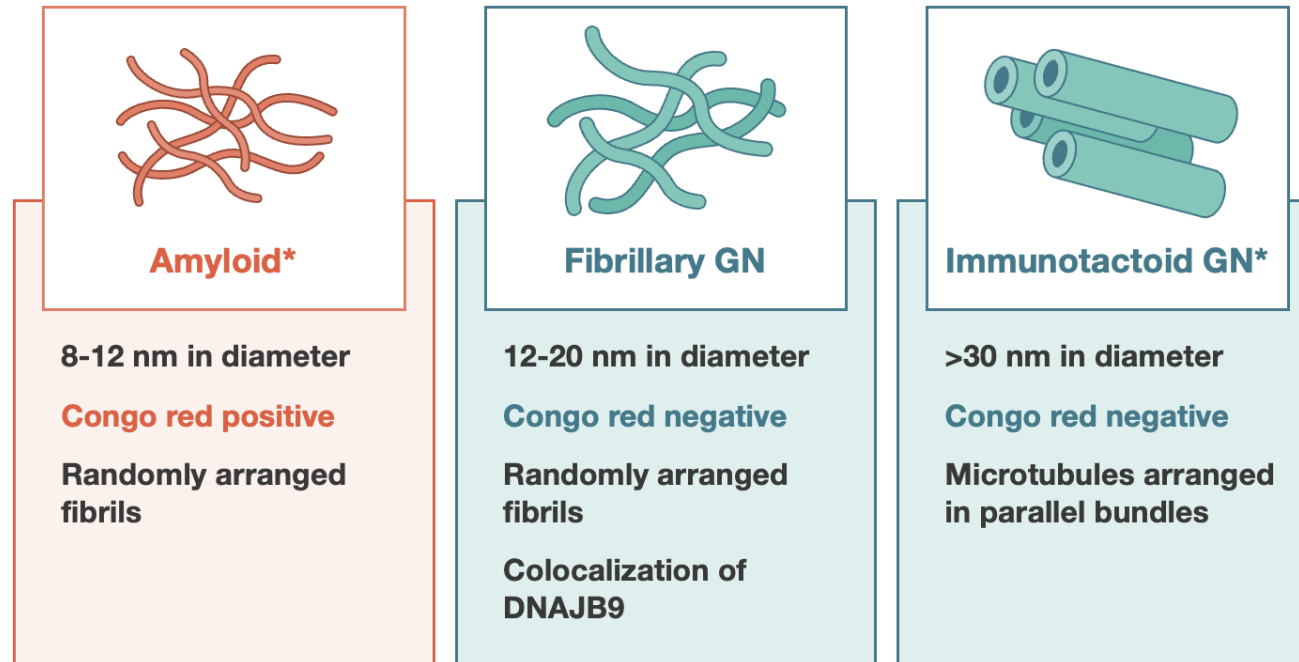
**Low C4**

# MGRS (Monoclonal Gammopathy of Renal Significance)

| Pathogenic paraprotein                                                                                           | Type of deposits    | Site of kidney involvement                   | Kidney disease                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Light chains</b><br>         | Organized (amyloid) | Mesangium, GBM, TBM, vessels, interstitium   | <b>AL amyloidosis</b>                                |
|                                                                                                                  | Non-organized       | GBM, TBM                                     | <b>Light chain deposition disease</b>                |
|                                                                                                                  | Crystals            | Proximal tubular cells                       | <b>Light chain proximal tubulopathy</b>              |
| <b>Whole immunoglobulin</b><br> | Non-organized       | Mesangium, subendothelial space              | <b>Proliferative GN with monoclonal IgG deposits</b> |
|                                                                                                                  | Microtubules        | Subepithelial and subendothelial spaces      | <b>Immunotactoid GN</b>                              |
|                                                                                                                  | Microtubules        | Intraluminal, subendothelial space           | <b>Cryoglobulinemic GN</b>                           |
|                                                                                                                  | No Ig deposits      | C3 deposits along GBM, TBM, mesangium        | <b>C3 GN</b>                                         |
|                                                                                                                  | No Ig deposits      | Subendothelial, intra-membranous C3 deposits | <b>Dense deposit disease</b>                         |

**Figure 2. Spectrum of kidney pathology in monoclonal gammopathy of renal significance.**  
GBM – glomerular basement membrane; GN – glomerulonephritis; TBM – tubular basement membrane.

# MGRS (Monoclonal Gammopathy of Renal Significance)



**Figure 3. Organized deposits by diameter, orientation and Congo red staining.** Deposits marked with (\*) are associated with monoclonal gammopathies. DNAJB9 – DnaJ heat shock protein family (Hsp40) member B9.

# Complications of Nephrotic Syndrome

## Thromboembolism

*7× VTE risk*

Highest in membranous (20–30% renal vein thrombosis). Loss of antithrombin III. Anticoagulate if albumin <2.5.

## Infection

*Encapsulated organisms*

Loss of immunoglobulins and complement opsonins → pneumococcal peritonitis, sepsis.

## Hyperlipidemia

*↑ CV risk*

Hepatic compensatory synthesis. Statin therapy often indicated.

## AKI

*Hypovolemia or interstitial*

Low oncotic pressure → reduced effective circulating volume. Watch with aggressive diuresis.



# Clinical Case I

A 42-year-old man presents with a 5-day history of palpable purpuric lesions over his buttocks and lower legs, along with new-onset arthralgias in both ankles and colicky abdominal pain with one episode of melena. He reports a mild upper respiratory illness about 3-4 days earlier. He has no significant past medical history and takes no medications. Vital signs are normal. Exam shows symmetric, non-blanching purpuric papules, mild ankle swelling, and diffuse abdominal tenderness without peritoneal signs. Labs show a creatinine of 1.6 mg/dL (baseline unknown), urinalysis with 2+ blood and 2+ protein, dysmorphic RBCs and RBC casts on microscopy, and a spot urine protein-to-creatinine ratio of 1.8 g/g. Platelet count and coagulation studies are normal. Serum C3 and C4 are normal.





# Clinical Case I

**Which of the following is the most likely diagnosis?**

- A. Cryoglobulinemic vasculitis
- B. Lupus Nephritis
- C. IgA vasculitis (Henoch-Schönlein purpura) with nephritis
- D. Post-infectious glomerulonephritis
- E. Thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura



# Clinical Case I

## Correct Answer:

**C. IgA vasculitis** (Synpharyngitic, Henoch-Schönlein purpura)

Other answers:

**A. Cryoglobulinemic vasculitis:** Arthralgia, rash +. Usually linked to HCV, C4 usually low, no abdominal symptoms

**B. Lupus Nephritis:** Unusual type of rash, C3/C4 normal here.

**D. Post-infectious GN:** low C3, more lag between infection and kidney involvement.

**E. TTP:** Thrombocytopenic rash similar, but platelets normal here. No neurological findings.



# Clinical Case II

A 58-year-old woman presents with fatigue, hemoptysis, and dyspnea over the past week. She denies fever, joint pain, or rash. Labs show hemoglobin 8.9 g/dL, creatinine 6.4 mg/dL (baseline 0.9 mg/dL one month ago), and urinalysis with 3+ blood, 2+ protein, dysmorphic RBCs, and RBC casts. Chest imaging shows diffuse bilateral alveolar infiltrates. She is started on hemodialysis for volume overload and uremia, and is intubated for hypoxic respiratory failure. Serologic workup (anti-GBM antibody, ANCA, complement levels) has been sent but results are not yet available.



# Clinical Case II

**What is the most appropriate next step in management?**

- A. Wait for serologic results before starting any immunosuppressive therapy
- B. Start pulse-dose corticosteroids alone; hold plasma exchange until ANCA/anti-GBM results return
- C. Start empiric pulse-dose corticosteroids and plasma exchange now, without waiting for serologic confirmation
- D. Start cyclophosphamide monotherapy and reassess once serologies result
- E. Proceed directly to renal biopsy before initiating any treatment



# Clinical Case II

**Answer: C. Corticosteroids + Plasma Exchange (ANCA/Anti-GBM, Medical Emergency)**

- A. Wait for serology** (could take days)
- B. B. Steroids without plasma exchange** – undertreats diffuse alveolar hemorrhage, one of the few settings where plasma exchange has benefit in *both* ANCA vasculitis (per PEXIVAS, reserved for severe DAH/severe kidney failure) and anti-GBM disease (standard for essentially all organ-threatening cases).
- C. D. Cyclophosphamide alone** – slow onset of effect
- D. E. Biopsy before treatment** – too sick for biopsy



# Clinical Case III

A 45-year-old woman with no significant past medical history undergoes a routine urinalysis as part of an annual physical exam, which shows 15 RBC/HPF. She denies gross hematuria, dysuria, flank pain, or recent exercise, menses, or catheterization. She has never smoked, has no occupational chemical exposures, no history of pelvic radiation or cyclophosphamide use, and no family history of urologic malignancy. Blood pressure and serum creatinine are normal. A repeat urinalysis 3 weeks later confirms 18 RBC/HPF with no other abnormalities.



# Clinical Case III

**Which of the following is the most appropriate next step?**

- A. No further evaluation needed; recheck urinalysis in 1 year
- B. Repeat urinalysis in 6 months only
- C. Renal and bladder ultrasound plus cystoscopy
- D. Cystoscopy plus CT urography
- E. CT urography alone



# Clinical Case III

**Correct answer: C — Renal and bladder ultrasound plus cystoscopy (Intermediate Risk – only one criteria; could use urine cytology to defer cystoscopy)**

- A. No further evaluation** - her RBC count is above the low-risk range (3–10/HPF)
- B. Repeat UA in 6 months only - low-risk** pathway; she doesn't qualify for it due to her RBC count (11–25/HPF)
- D. Cystoscopy plus CT urography - high-risk** pathway (reserved for >25 RBC/HPF, gross hematuria history, heavier smoking, or older age/male sex plus risk factors).
- E. CT urography alone, no cystoscopy** — incorrect on two counts: CT urography isn't the imaging of choice at the intermediate-risk tier tier.





# Take Home Points

- Hematuria: Classify based on risk (choose wisely)
- Glomerular disease can be Ab-mediated (Lupus, ANCA, anti-GBM), abnormal Ig (IgA, MGRS – Amyloid/Cryo) or a systemic process (secondary MCD/FSGS)
- Low C3 + normal C4 → post-infectious GN or C3 glomerulopathy. Low C3 AND C4 → lupus or cryoglobulinemia.
- Catch-words: PLA2R = Membranous Nephropathy; Anti-nephrin = MCD/FSGS; Congo Red = Amyloid



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