



UNC
KIDNEY CENTER

Podcast Transcript:
Dr. Ron Falk
FSGS
“FSGS: Symptoms”

Patient: What kind of symptoms could I experience with FSGS?

Dr. Falk: When you leak protein from your blood into your urine, you lose protein out of the blood and the most common protein there is serum albumin. If the albumin decreases in your blood, then your body tries to adapt to that loss. It increases, for example, the amount of cholesterol in your blood, because your liver is making more cholesterol.

The real worry if you have low serum albumin from loss of this protein into your urine, is that you develop swelling or edema, predominantly in your ankles or your feet or your legs. That's because albumin holds fluid in blood vessels, and if you don't have albumin in your blood vessels, you leak fluid into the area around those blood vessels, which you see when you push your finger or your thumb into your ankle and you see a little pit or indentation. This is called pitting edema. So what you'll see in some patients, edema or swelling of your ankles or legs, your albumin will be low in your blood, your cholesterol will be high, and over the course of time, if your disease is not well treated, you may have a decline in kidney function.