



1.0 Chronic abdominal pain

Introduction

Chronic and recurrent abdominal pain is common, affecting up to 10% of all children.^(1,2,3) In the majority of cases, it gets better with time and without any specific treatment.^(1,2,3)

Features that suggest a more sinister cause include: pain consistently waking the child from sleep, weight loss, significant vomiting or diarrhoea, blood in stools.^(1,2,3,4)

Pre-referral investigations

- FBC, ESR, CRP, U&E's, LFT, coeliac serology^(1,2,3)
- Urine MC&S^(1,2,3)
- Stool MC&S, virology, parasites/oocytes^(1,2,3)
- Consider checking lipase and/or H Pylori breath test/serology (NB positive serology does not indicate active infection)^(1,2,3)

Pre-referral management

Explain that in otherwise healthy children who have no concerning features noted on history, a normal clinical examination and normal baseline investigations, the outcome is generally excellent.^(1, 2, 3) Strongly encourage the continuation (or return) to normal daily activities (eg school attendance)^(1, 3)

If there is any suggestion of constipation, treat with stool softener +/- stimulant^(1, 2)

[Link to laxative protocol](#)

If there is any suggestion of oesophagitis (eg epigastric pain, pain associated with meals), treat with a proton pump inhibitor for 4 weeks.^(1,2)


When to refer

If there are any features suggesting a more sinister cause of abdominal pain, or if symptoms persist after initial investigations and management.^(3, 4)

References

1. American Academy of Pediatrics. Chronic Abdominal pain in Children Pediatrics Vol 115, 3 2005.
2. www.patient.co.uk/doctor/recurrent-abdominal-pain-in-children. February 2013

3. http://www.rch.org.au/kidsconnect/prerefferral_guidelines/Chronic_abdominal_pain/ September 2012.
4. <http://bestpractice.bmj.com/best-practice/monograph/767.html>

File Name and Path:	Chronic Abdominal pain pre referral guideline		
Document Owner:	Dr Andrew Martin, Charlotte Allen, DPAM, CNS		
Reviewer / Team:	DPAM		
Executive Sponsor:	Executive Director Medical Services		
Date First Issued:	November 2013	Version:	1
Last Revised:		Review Date:	November 2015
Endorsed by:	MAC	Date:	October 8 th 2013
Standards Applicable:	NSQHS Standards: 		
The accuracy of this document is not guaranteed when printed			