

Woman, Child and Family Service – Paediatrics
Tauranga Hospital
Cameron Road Private Bag 12024
Tauranga NEW ZEALAND

RE: Referral advice for chronic abdominal pain.

Chronic and recurrent abdominal pains are common symptoms in children and adolescents occurring in up to 15% of all children. Although this pain sounds troublesome for this child, there are no features to suggest an organic cause at this time.

Please re refer them to paediatrics if they should go on to develop any of the following signs and symptoms:

- Pain that wakens the child from sleep
- Significant vomiting
- Blood in the bowel motion
- Unintentional weight loss or slow growth
- Changes in bowel or bladder function
- Pain or bleeding with urination
- Pain localized away from the umbilicus
- Behaviour changes including lethargy or decreased responsiveness
- Family history of Inflammatory Bowel disease or other significant gastrointestinal illness
- School absenteeism
- Extra-intestinal symptoms e.g. fever, rash, mouth ulcers, joint pain

Most patients who do not have any of the above symptoms are likely to have a functional disorder or constipation. Functional disorders are conditions which do not have an identifiable cause but include conditions such as:

- functional dyspepsia
- irritable bowel syndrome
- abdominal migraine
- functional abdominal pain

In the majority of children with chronic abdominal pain, no investigations are indicated. However, you may wish to consider investigations based on their symptoms, which could include coeliac antibodies, full blood count, CRP, ESR, serum chemistry profile, and pregnancy test in adolescent females. You may also wish to consider urinalysis including urine culture and stool testing for leucocytes, culture, parasitology, and faecal calprotectin if there are concerns regarding inflammatory bowel disease.

At this stage we have not made an Outpatient appointment. If you felt this was indicated based on the above criteria, please re-refer to us with this information.

Ngā mihi

Yours sincerely

(Electronically checked and approved)
Paediatric Grading Team