

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

Re: Mildly raised coeliac antibodies

Mildly abnormal coeliac serology tests are very common. For the most part, children with mildly abnormal serology do not have coeliac disease. It is important to ensure the child was on an adequate gluten-containing (1-3 slices of bread or the equivalent amount of gluten) diet for at least 4 weeks prior to performing coeliac serology, otherwise the validity of the test is limited. If the child's family has been limiting or excluding gluten, then they will need to reintroduce this before performing the test.

An IgA should always be performed with coeliac serology. If there is a low IgA, the validity of the tTG-IgA becomes of limited use. A DGP-IgG should then be used as the primary test.

- A negative DGP means this child is unlikely to have coeliac disease.
- All children with a +ve DGP (with low IgA) should be referred through to the paediatric Department

In the context of a normal IgA, the tissue transglutaminase tTG guides management as follows:

- tTG is less than twice the upper limit of normal: continue on a gluten-containing diet and repeat testing in 6 months.
- tTG is greater than twice the upper limit of normal: EMA testing is needed to determine the management (please ask lab to add this on):
 - +ve EMA - refer all patients to the paediatric Department.
 - -ve EMA - contact paediatrics for advice: management will depend on symptoms and suspicion, and in this context DQ2/DQ8 testing may be useful.

In general, HLA DQ2 and DQ8 testing is not needed as a first line screening test. Up to 99.5% of coeliac disease patients will carry a DQ2 or 8 allele. However, the test is most useful if it comes back negative, as 30% of the European population carry one of these alleles, with only a small percentage having or developing coeliac disease. We use this test for its negative predictive value.

The full NZ guideline can be found at <https://media.starship.org.nz/auckland-regional-pathway-for-assessment-and-management-of-coeliac-disease/paediatriccoeliacpathway.pdf>

Please refer if indicated based on the above criteria.

Ngā mihi

Yours sincerely

Electronically checked and approved
Paediatric Grading Team

Reliable information about Children's Health is available at: www.kidshealth.org.nz developed by NZ Health Professionals. Reviewed and endorsed by the NZ Paediatric Society.