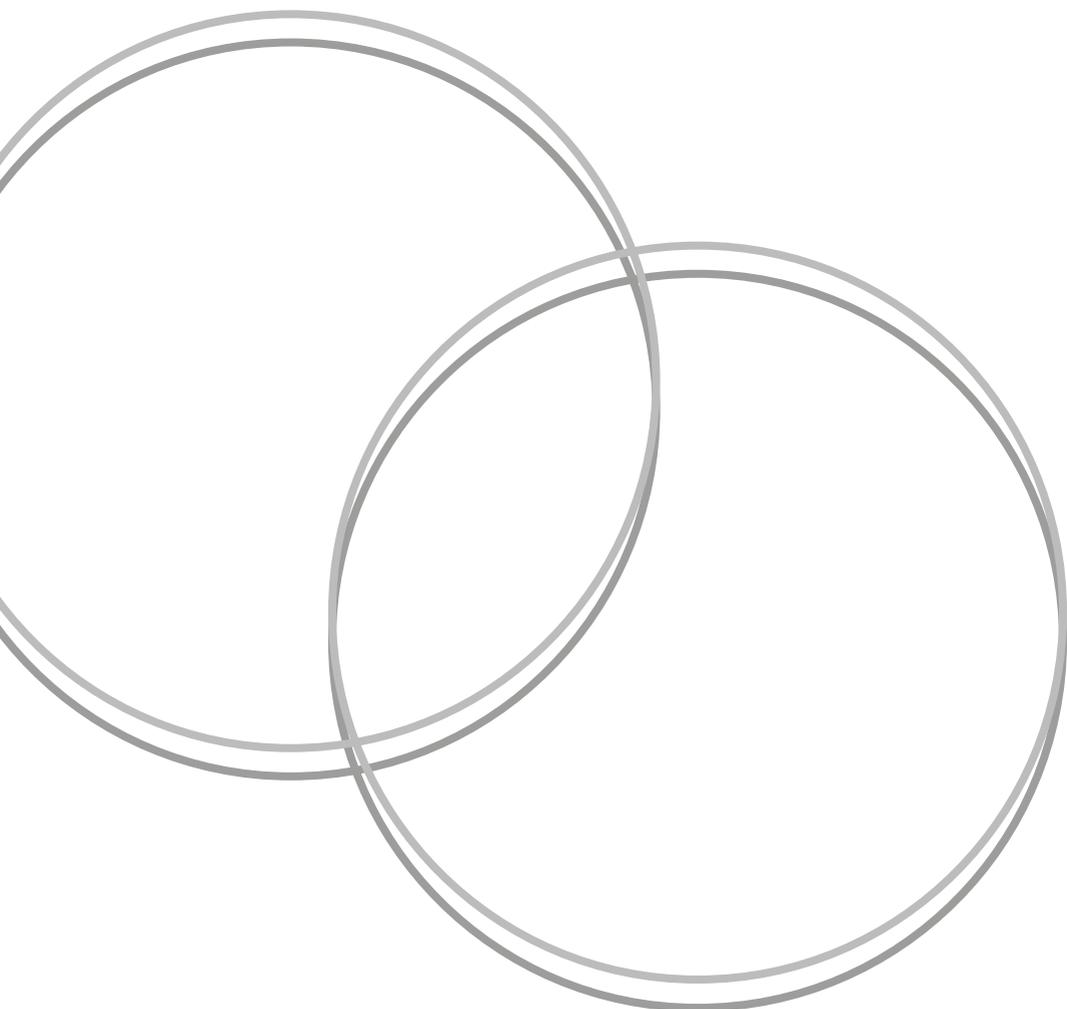




Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Abdominal Pain

**Information for Parents or Carers**



## **Abdominal pain**

- Abdominal pain in children is common. Most cases are not serious, and children usually get better quickly without any treatment.
- Common causes of tummy ache include constipation, a urine infection (UTI), tummy bugs (gastroenteritis) and other viral illnesses that can make the glands in their tummy hurt. Children may feel stomach pain when they are worried about themselves or people around them.
- Less common causes include appendicitis. Sometimes children are sent home without having a clear cause of their pain to see if the symptoms improve on their own. This will only happen if we are certain that this is safe for your child, and we will always recommend you bring your child back to hospital if their symptoms worsen.
- Some children suffer repeat episodes of stomach pain, which can be worrying for parents. This will be investigated through the outpatient department. Sometimes, no health problem can be found.

## **What are the symptoms?**

- Your child will complain of pain in their tummy
- Your child may hold their tummy
- Your child may walk bent forwards from their hips and find it difficult to stand up straight
- Your child may lay with their knees drawn up towards their chest
- Your child may not be able to go for a poo, or have discomfort when trying
- Your child may complain of pain when going for a wee
- Your child may experience vomiting and/or diarrhoea.

## **What should I do to help my child at home?**

- Ensure your child has plenty of rest and encourage them to drink lots of clear fluids to prevent dehydration. Your child may not feel like eating until their symptoms settle, providing your child is drinking plenty they will not come to any harm from this. If they are not eating after three days please contact their GP for advice.
- Give your child paracetamol or ibuprofen if they are uncomfortable or in pain, unless advised otherwise by your child's doctor (follow the dose instructions on the bottle).

## **If your child is...**

- Drinking well
- Passing urine regularly
- Alert and responsive
- Having pain that resolves with pain relief.

Continue to care for them at home using the above advice provided.

## **When should I seek further help for my child?**

- Your child has pain that is not improving, or is worsening despite regular pain medicine
- Your child has blood or mucous in their stools (poo)
- Your child has a swollen or tender tummy
- Your child has pain or lumps in their groin
- Your child has problems passing urine (wee)
- Your child has a high temperature that has lasted for more than 5 days.

Your child should see a nurse or doctor today. Please ring your child's GP surgery or call NHS 111.

## **When should I come to hospital?**

- Your child is unusually sleepy or floppy, or is pale, sweaty and unwell looking
- Your child is vomiting blood or bile (dark green, not yellow vomit)
- They are breathing faster than usual or is finding it hard to breathe
- Your child develops testicular pain or swelling
- Your child has blood or mucous in their stools (poo) and you can't get hold of your GP
- You are concerned that your child is very unwell.

Go straight to the nearest Emergency Department or phone 999 for an ambulance.

## **Useful numbers**

For out of hours GP service or advice ring **NHS 111**.

**Always dial 999 for an ambulance in an Emergency.**





## Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)



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