

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS WITH CHILDREN GOING HOME AFTER COMING TO HOSPITAL WITH ABDOMINAL PAIN

This leaflet tells you about abdominal pain in children. It is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor.

Background

Abdominal pain is very common in children; in fact all children experience abdominal pain at some point.

There are many conditions that cause abdominal pain. In 50% of children coming to hospital with abdominal pain no cause is found, named nonspecific abdominal pain (NSAP). The cause for NSAP is unknown, but we do know it will get better without treatment over the next week. This doesn't mean we don't understand your child has pain, it just means there is nothing concerning going on.

Your review by the hospital team has ruled out conditions that require urgent treatment today. Occasionally we see children at the beginning of their disease course. Certain conditions may become more obvious over the next day or two and we may want to see your child again. Your doctor will let you know if this is likely to be the case.

Features to look out for are documented later in this leaflet.

Children often have abdominal pain associated with viral upper respiratory tract infections, due to enlarged lymph nodes in the abdomen, this is called mesenteric adenitis. This can be looked after at home with Paracetamol and Ibuprofen.

What to do once you get home

- We advise you to give regular paracetamol four times a day and ibuprofen if needed for a day or two using the dose recommended by your doctor. We would expect the pain to settle.
- We recommend keeping your child well hydrated with oral fluids such as water or squash.
- Making sure your child isn't constipated with a diet high in fibre and fluids will help prevent abdominal pain in future.

We will give you 48 hours open access to the Children's Assessment Unit (CAU), which means if you have any concerns after discharge you can get in contact with a Nurse or Doctor on the CAU on the number provided below. You do not need to contact your GP or A&E first. CAU will advise whether you should bring your child back for review.

What signs should I look out for?

If you notice any of the following, we recommend you contact CAU for advice whether to bring your child back for review:

- Worsening pain, despite pain killers
- Vomiting and not keeping down drinks
- Decreased need to urinate or dry nappies
- Change in feeding patterns, i.e., not taking milk
- Child listless, tired, not responding, not themselves
- Severe temperatures that do not settle with Paracetamol and Ibuprofen

Children's Assessment Unit Contact Number: 01603 289774