

Do not routinely prescribe acid blockers and motility agents in infants with GER

Physiological gastroesophageal reflux (GER) is very common in infants, as 70-85% of infants have daily regurgitations within the first two months of life. In 95% of infants, regurgitation resolves without intervention before they reach one year of age.

What is known about acid blockers and motility agents:

- *Proton pump inhibitors (PPI):*
 - Change acidic GER to non-acidic GER, without proven benefit on symptoms like discomfort, crying duration or feeding refusal.
 - Are associated with a significant increase in severe infections.
 - Have an impact on the gut microbiome development.
- *Motility agents:*
 - Lack evidence supporting a benefit on symptoms of GER in infants.
 - Have side effects on the heart and nervous system.
- Non-pharmacological measures may be used to reduce physiological regurgitation if perceived as a problem.

How to talk with patients and parents about acid blockers and motility agents/GER:

- Reflux is not a common cause of unexplained crying, irritability or distressed behavior in otherwise healthy infants. We will look for causes we can treat to help your child.
- When we can exclude other causes, the best course of action is to undergo a trial with a formula tailored to be the most easily tolerated by the infant's digestive tract.
- Suppressing the natural acidity of the stomach is suppressing a natural defense mechanism of the body and is not free of harm.

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This EAP recommendation is in accordance with the Choosing Wisely recommendations of:

- Switzerland: www.paediatricschweiz.ch/choosingwisely
- Canada: <https://choosingwiselycanada.org/recommendation/paediatrics/>
- Norway: <https://www.legeforeningen.no/kloke-valg/til-helsepersonell/legeforeningens-anbefalinger/norsk-barnelegeforening/allergitesting/>
- Australia: <https://www.choosingwisely.org.au/recommendations/racp4>
- American Family Physicians Choosing Wisely: <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/collections/choosing-wisely/19.html>
- Italy: <https://choosingwiselyitaly.org/raccomandazione-prof/non-prescrivere-farmaci-anti-h2-inibitori-di-pompa-protonica-e-procinetici-nel-reflusso-gastroesofageo-rge-fisiologico-che-non-compromette-la-crescita-e-non-si-associa-a-segni-o-sintomi-sospetti/>

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#Gastroesophageal Reflux

