

Chronic abdominal pain is a common pediatric problem encountered by pediatricians and other medical caregivers. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition have issued a clinical and technical report, "Chronic Abdominal Pain in Children" in order to provide guidance in the evaluation and treatment of children with chronic abdominal pain. Functional abdominal pain, meaning pain without evidence of an underlying disease is the most common cause of abdominal pain in children. Neither anxiety, depression, behavior problems nor the presence of associated symptoms (such as nausea, headache and joint pain) can help discriminate between functional pain and pain from a disease. However, the presence of alarm symptoms such as weight loss, gastrointestinal bleeding, persistent fever, chronic severe diarrhea or significant vomiting may suggest a higher likelihood of disease and is an indication to run diagnostic tests. For chronic abdominal pain not associated with organic disease, it is recommended that reasonable treatment goals be established, with the main aim being the return to normal function rather than the complete disappearance of pain.

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