

Managing Gastro-Oesophageal Reflux (GOR) in Infants Pathway



Infant presents with Gastro-Oesophageal Reflux
Are Red flag symptoms present?

NO

YES

Is infant showing marked distress?

NO

YES

Discuss with ST4+
Do any features suggest
immediate threat to life?
Consider 2222

Red Flags:

- Bile-stained vomit
- Frequent forceful (projectile) vomiting
- Blood in vomit* or stool
- Faltering growth
- Abdominal distention / chronic diarrhoea
- Unwell child / fever / altered responsiveness
- Bulging fontanelle / rapidly increasing head circumference
- Late onset (after 6months)

Reassure:

- GOR very common
- Usually begins before 8 weeks
- May be frequent
- Usually becomes less frequent with time
- Does not usually need further investigation or treatment
- Direct to [online support](#)

Breastfed

Direct them to seek a Breastfeeding assessment through this [link](#)

Formula fed

1 Review feeding history, making up of formula, positioning...

Then

2 Reduce feed volumes if excessive (>150ml/kg/day) - see [here](#) for more info

Then

3 Offer trial of smaller, more frequent feeds (more than every 2hrs impractical)

Then

4 Advise parent to purchase pre-thickened formula (need large hole/fast flow teat).

NICE recommends parents consult the [First Steps Nutrition Website](#) for advice about available types.

A thickener added to usual infant formula, such as Instant Carobel® could also be tried

If not successful after 2 weeks

If using, STOP pre-thickened / thickening formulae or thickener
2 weeks trial of Infant Gaviscon®

Bottle fed: 1-2 doses* into 115mls (4oz) of feed

Breastfed: 1-2 doses* mixed up into a liquid (with cooled boiled water or expressed breastmilk) and given with a spoon

If successful after 2 weeks

If not successful after 2 weeks

Try stopping it at regular interval for recovery assessment as GOR usually resolves spontaneously

Consider [CMPA](#) and/or Refer to Paediatrician for further investigation if GORD or alternative diagnosis suspected

Infant Gaviscon®

*1 dual sachet = 2 doses

If < 4.5kg, 1 dose
If > 4.5kg, 2 doses

- Prescribe with directions in terms of 'dose' to avoid direction errors
- Maximum 6 doses a day
- Omit if fever or diarrhoea

A 4-week trial of PPI / H₂RA can be initiated in primary care if alginate therapy is not working but it is best reserved if overt regurgitation AND unexplained feeding difficulties / distressed behaviour / faltering growth