Diagnostic Criteria for Functional Constipation

Must include TWO or more of the following:

1. Two or fewer defecations per week
2. At least one episode per week of incontinence after the acquisition of toileting skills
3. History of retentive posturing or excessive stool retention
4. History of painful or hard bowel movements
5. Presence of a large fecal mass in the rectum
6. History of large diameter stools which may obstruct the toilet

Inclusion Criteria

• ≥ 1 month of age
• Refer to diagnostic criteria for functional constipation

Exclusion Criteria

• Neutropenia
• BMT
• Bowel surgery within 30 days (Consult Surgery)
• Kidney failure
• Cardiac patient on Diuretics (Consult Cardiology)

Red Flags

• Midline dimple; Tuft of hair over lower back
• New onset lower limb weakness/motor delay
• Signs of systemic illness: fever, mouth sores, joint pain, rash
• Weight loss
• First passage meconium after 48 hours of life
• Persistent abdominal distention/vomiting (Consider obstruction and other etiologies)
• Bloody diarrhea
• Bilious emesis
• Failure to thrive; Malabsorption
• Tight rectum gripping finger; Explosive stool/air from rectum upon withdrawal examining finger
• Family history of Hirschprung’s disease

Concern for underlying disease

Preferred Medication: Soap Suds Enema

• Add 27 ml Castile Soap (3 packets) to 1000 ml of Normal Saline
• Dose 20 ml/kg (Max Dose 1000 ml)

Patients should NOT be discharged without evacuating their enema

Discharge and Education

1-3 years old

Cleanout: Take 1 capful (17 grams) Miralax every day for 3 days in 8 oz. of juice
Maintenance: On day 4 take ¼ capful (4.25 grams) Miralax daily in at least 4 oz. of any liquid
If stools are too liquid, decrease Miralax to 1/8 capful but do not stop taking

4-5 years old

Cleanout: Take 2 capfuls (34 grams) Miralax every day for 3 days in 16 oz. of juice
Maintenance: On day 4 take ¼ capful (4.25 grams) Miralax daily in at least 4 oz. of any liquid
If stools are too liquid, decrease Miralax to 1/8 capful but do not stop taking

6-11 years old

Cleanout: Take 7 capfuls (119 grams) Miralax for 1 day in 32 oz. Gatorade
Maintenance: On day 2 take ½ capful (8.5 grams) Miralax daily in at least 4 oz. of any liquid
If stools are too liquid, decrease Miralax to 1/4 capful but do not stop taking

12 years and older

Cleanout: Take 14 capfuls (238 grams) Miralax for 1 day in 64 oz. Gatorade
Maintenance: On day 2 take 1 capful (17 grams) Miralax daily in at least 8 oz. of any liquid
If stools are too liquid, decrease Miralax to 1/2 capful but do not stop taking

• Encourage fluid intake (especially during cleanout)
• Referral to PCP in 2 weeks. Continue maintenance dosing until seen by PCP

Developed through the efforts of Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and physicians on Children’s medical staff in the interest of advancing pediatric healthcare. This pathway is a general guideline and does not represent a professional care standard governing providers’ obligation to patients. Ultimately the patient’s physician must determine the most appropriate care. © 2016 Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, Inc.