



Parent information leaflet on Chest Pain in Children

This leaflet has been produced to assist you and give you advice about chest pain in children. This does not replace the discussion that you have had with your healthcare team but may provide you with some useful information should you have any questions after your visit to the hospital.

Chest Pain in Children

In most children, who have no medical problems, chest pain is not caused by a heart problem. This is different to adults (over 16 years), in whom chest pain often reveals a significant heart issue. The most common cause of chest pain in children is pain involving the chest wall. This is the structure that surrounds the heart, lungs and includes the ribs and breastbone. Other causes can be related to the stomach, the lungs or stress.

Chest Wall Pain

This type of pain is usually worse when touching the chest and can be worse on movement. A brief period of rest, with hot compresses and anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen may help to improve the pain.

Gastrointestinal Causes

Burning pain in the chest from acid in the stomach can result in chest pain. Your child may be tender when the abdomen is examined by the doctor. It can be helped by eating smaller, and more frequent meals and staying upright for 30 minutes after eating. Your doctor may recommend a short course of medication to help with the symptoms.

Stress or Anxiety

Chest pain is a common presentation in children who are feeling stressed or worried. Often this can be related to a significant event in a child's life, or sometimes there is no obvious cause for. You can help your child by finding ways to help distract them from the discomfort, or speaking to them about their wellbeing may also help.

What can we do at home?

- Continue the advice that has been given to you during your hospital visit
- If you are worried or the symptoms change or worsen return to your GP or the ED
- Take any prescribed medication as advised during your visit to the hospital
- Be assured by the advice from the hospital that this is a non-concerning chest pain