



Growth questions to ask your IBD team

A practical checklist for parents and carers of children with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis.

Growth is an important part of managing childhood IBD. Use this checklist to prepare for appointments and make sure the questions that matter most to your family are covered.

Understanding my child's growth

- ☐ Is my child growing at the expected rate?
- ☐ How does their current height compare with their previous growth pattern?
- ☐ Has their growth velocity changed?
- ☐ Is their weight appropriate for their height and age?
- ☐ Are they following their usual growth curve?
- ☐ Have they dropped across any growth percentiles?
- ☐ Could their IBD be affecting their growth?
- ☐ What should we be watching between appointments?

Questions about weight

- ☐ Is my child's current weight a concern?
- ☐ Are they gaining weight appropriately?
- ☐ Should we be concerned about recent weight loss?
- ☐ Could their weight changes be related to active IBD?
- ☐ Are they getting enough calories and protein?
- ☐ Should we be trying to increase their energy intake?
- ☐ Do you recommend a paediatric IBD dietitian?
- ☐ Would nutritional supplements be helpful?

Could IBD inflammation be affecting growth?

- ☐ Could active inflammation be affecting my child's growth?
- ☐ Is their IBD currently well controlled?
- ☐ Could they have ongoing inflammation even if they seem well?

- ☐ Do their blood tests suggest inflammation?
- ☐ Would a faecal calprotectin test help assess what is happening?
- ☐ Could their recent symptoms or flare have affected their growth?
- ☐ Does their treatment need to be reviewed?

Nutrition and deficiencies

- ☐ Is my child getting enough energy and protein for growth?
- ☐ Are there any nutrients we should be monitoring?
- ☐ Should we check iron and ferritin?
- ☐ Should we check vitamin D and calcium?
- ☐ Should we check vitamin B12, folate or zinc?
- ☐ Could my child's diet be contributing to poor growth?
- ☐ Could a restrictive diet be affecting their nutrition?
- ☐ Would seeing an IBD dietitian be helpful?

Growth and puberty

- ☐ Is my child's puberty progressing as expected?
- ☐ Could their IBD be affecting puberty?
- ☐ Should we be concerned that puberty hasn't started yet?
- ☐ Could delayed puberty explain some of their growth pattern?
- ☐ Should their hormone levels be checked?
- ☐ Would you recommend seeing a paediatric endocrinologist?
- ☐ Is there anything we can do now to support healthy growth and development?

Tests and monitoring

- ☐ What tests do you recommend to investigate their growth?
- ☐ Do they need blood tests?
- ☐ Should we check inflammatory markers such as CRP or ESR?
- ☐ Should we check their iron and nutritional levels?
- ☐ Would a faecal calprotectin test be useful?
- ☐ How often should their height and weight be measured?
- ☐ How often should their growth be reviewed?
- ☐ What would make you want to investigate further?

Treatment and growth

- ☐ Could any of my child's medications be affecting their growth or appetite?
- ☐ Is their current IBD treatment controlling inflammation effectively?
- ☐ Could improving disease control help their growth?
- ☐ Are there any treatment changes we should consider?
- ☐ How will we know whether treatment is helping their growth?
- ☐ Are there any medication side effects we should watch for?

Body image and emotional wellbeing

- ☐ My child is worried about being smaller or larger than their friends. How can we support them?
- ☐ Could their concerns about weight or appearance be affecting their eating?
- ☐ What should we do if they become anxious about food or their body?
- ☐ Is there someone we can speak with about body image or emotional wellbeing?
- ☐ How can we talk about weight and growth without making our child feel self-conscious?

Looking ahead

- ☐ What would you like my child's growth to look like over the next year?
- ☐ What should we monitor at home?
- ☐ When should we contact you between appointments?
- ☐ What changes would be a reason to bring their appointment forward?
- ☐ When should their growth and puberty be reviewed again?
- ☐ Who should we contact if we have concerns about their nutrition or growth?

Before you leave the appointment

- ☐ How is my child growing?
- ☐ Is their weight appropriate?
- ☐ Is their IBD affecting their growth?
- ☐ Are any tests needed?
- ☐ Does their nutrition need attention?
- ☐ Is puberty progressing as expected?
- ☐ What should we monitor at home?
- ☐ When should we contact the IBD team?
- ☐ When is the next growth review?

My notes

Remember: Your child's IBD team will usually look at growth, nutrition, puberty, symptoms and inflammation together. You don't need to work it all out on your own.

This checklist is for general education and does not replace advice from your child's healthcare team. Growth, nutrition and puberty are individual, and recommendations may vary depending on your child's age, IBD type, treatment and overall health.