

Intussusception

What is intussusception?

Intussusception occurs when one portion of the bowel slides into the next, much like a telescope. When this occurs, it can create a blockage in the bowel, with the walls of the intestines pressing against one another. This leads to inflammation and decreased blood flow to the affected intestines. It can occur at any age but is most common between two months and two years with a peak occurrence at five to nine months old.

Symptoms of intussusception

- Intense intermittent abdominal pain (two to three episodes per hour)
- Abdominal distension
- Vomiting
- Bowel actions akin to 'red currant jelly' (containing blood and mucous)
- Possible fever
- Increased tiredness

Treatment of intussusception

Your doctor may order for your child to have an abdominal x-ray or ultrasound and pathology tests may be required. The treatment process differs for each child but may involve antibiotics, a nasogastric tube and in some cases, surgery. Your doctor will discuss which treatment process is suitable for your child.

If hospitalised

Admission

The admission process is an opportunity to discuss your child's hospital stay and any special needs they may have while in hospital or for going home.

Diet and fluids

Your child will not be able to eat or drink until they are reviewed by the doctor and may have an intravenous drip to maintain hydration.

Medications

Children with intussusception may be prescribed intravenous antibiotics. Pain relief will also be administered to relieve any discomfort.

Visiting hours

The Cabrini Paediatric Ward does not have set visiting hours.

Discharge

Your child will be discharged when your doctor is happy with their progress and condition and you are confident with caring for them at home.

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

Care at home

It is important for your child to rest whilst they are recovering. Paracetamol may be required to relieve any discomfort. Continue to observe your child whilst recovering and report any concerns to the doctor.

Follow-up

Please contact your doctor's rooms to organise a follow-up appointment.

When to contact your doctor

- Severe abdominal pain
- Persistent vomiting
- Changes in bowel actions
- Persistent temperature of 38.5°C or higher

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Ward using the phone number below.