

Neurogenic Bowel Dysfunction in Children and Adolescents

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Abstract

Neurogenic/neuropathic bowel dysfunction (NBD) is common in children who are affected by congenital and acquired neurological disease, and negatively impacts quality of life.

In the past, NBD received less attention than neurogenic bladder, generally being considered only in spina bifida (the most common cause of pediatric NBD). Many methods of conservative and medical management of NBD are reported, including relatively recently Transanal Irrigation (TAI). Based on the literature and personal experience, an expert group (pediatric urologists/surgeons/gastroenterologists with specific experience in NBD) focused on NBD in children and adolescents. A statement document was created using a modified Delphi method.

The range of causes of pediatric NBD are discussed in this paper. The various therapeutic approaches are presented to improve clinical management. The population of children and adolescents with NBD is increasing, due both to the higher survival rate and better diagnosis.

While NBD is relatively predictable in producing either constipation or fecal incontinence, or both, its various effects on each patient will depend on a wide range of underlying causes and accompanying comorbidities. For this reason, management of NBD should be tailored individually with a combined multidisciplinary therapy appropriate for the status of the affected child and caregivers.

Areas for reflection

- How can we improve recognition of neurogenic bowel dysfunction amongst children?
- What treatment pathways do you have in place for children with neurogenic bowel dysfunction and do they follow the recommendations presented here?

If you would like further information on neurogenic bowel dysfunction, you can read more [here](#).

