1. Who should be tested for H. pylori?
   - Patients with dyspepsia symptoms
   - Patients with current or past gastric or duodenal ulcers or upper GI bleed
   - Patients with a first degree relative with a history of gastric cancer
   - First generation immigrants from Asia, Africa, Central and South America

2. Alarm features
   Dyspepsia symptoms plus one or more of following:
   - Age >60 with new and persistent symptoms (>3 months)
   - GI bleeding (melena or hematemesis) or anemia (if yes, do CBC, INR, PTT as part of referral)
   - Progressive dysphagia
   - Persistent vomiting (not associated with cannabis use)
   - Unintended weight loss (≥5-10% of body weight over 6 months)
   - Personal history of peptic ulcer disease
   - First degree relative with history of esophageal or gastric cancer

3. Diagnosis
   - Test using HpSAT or UBT
   - Before testing, patient must be off antibiotics x4 weeks and off PPI at least 3 days
   - Local resources

4. Treatment
   - Round 1: CLAMET Quad or BMT Quad
   - Round 2 (if needed): CLAMET Quad or BMT Quad
   - Round 3 (if needed): Levo Amox
   - Round 4 (if needed): Rif-Amox or refer to GI

5. Confirm eradication
   - HpSAT or UBT at least 4 weeks after finishing treatment
   - Before testing, patient must be off antibiotics x4 weeks and off PPI at least 3 days

6. Treatment failure
   - Proceed to next round of treatment
   - Option to refer to GI after 3 failed treatment attempts
HELICOBACTER PYLORI (H. PYLORI) PRIMER

- Overall prevalence in Canada is about 20-30%, depending on age.
- Prevalence is considerably higher in First Nations communities and in immigrants from developing countries in South America, Africa, and Asia. Prevalence of antibiotic resistant strains of Helicobacter pylori (Hp) is higher in certain immigrant populations (Southeast Asia, Africa, Central America, and South America).
- Infection most commonly occurs during childhood.
- About 5-15% of patients with Hp will develop duodenal or gastric ulcers. This is higher in patients who chronically use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs including low-dose aspirin.
- Hp increases the risk of gastric adenocarcinoma and MALT lymphoma, but overall the lifetime risk of this is very low at less than 1%.
- There is an increased risk of gastric cancer among First Nations people and immigrants from developing countries such as South America and Asia.

EXPANDED DETAILS

1. Who should be tested for Hp?
   - Patients with dyspepsia, characterized by epigastric pain or discomfort that may be triggered by eating and may be accompanied by a sense of abdominal distention or “bloating”, early satiety, or loss of appetite.
     - For patients with dyspepsia symptoms, testing for Hp may be completed prior to trial of proton pump inhibitor (PPI) or after PPI treatment.
     - Please see the Dyspepsia pathway.
   - Patients with current or past gastric or duodenal ulcers or upper GI bleed.
   - Patients who have a personal or first-degree relative with history of gastric cancer should be considered for testing once in adulthood.
   - First generation immigrants from high prevalence areas (Southeast Asia, Africa, Central America, and South America).
   - NOTE: many Hp infected patients are asymptomatic.
   - Most studies suggest that Hp does not play a role in gastro-esophageal reflux disease (GERD) and patients are understandably disappointed when their GERD does not improve after eradication of Hp.
     - Please see the GERD pathway.

2. Alarm Features (warranting consideration of referral for consultation/gastroscopy)
   - Dyspepsia symptoms or Hp diagnosis accompanied by one or more of the following:
     - Age >60 with new and persistent symptoms (>3 months)
     - GI bleeding (hematemesis or melena – see primer on black stool on page 3) or anemia (if yes, complete CBC, INR, PTT as part of referral)
     - Progressive dysphagia
     - Persistent vomiting (not associated with cannabis use)
     - Unintended weight loss (≥ 5-10% of body weight over 6 months)
     - Personal history of peptic ulcer disease
     - First degree relative with a history of esophageal or gastric cancer
       - For these patients, it is appropriate to test for Hp while they are waiting for consultation/gastroscopy and to initiate treatment if there is a positive result.

---

1 There is some variation between guidelines about the age at which dyspepsia symptoms are more concerning and warrant stronger consideration of gastroscopy. Choosing Wisely Canada now uses age 65. However, age is only one element of a risk assessment related to the need for gastroscopy to investigate dyspepsia symptoms.
Primer on Black Stool

- Possible causes of black stool
  - Upper GI bleeding
  - Slow right-sided colonic bleeding
  - Epistaxis or hemoptysis with swallowed blood
- Melena is dark/black, sticky, tarry, and has a distinct odour
- Patient history should include:
  - Any prior GI bleeds or ulcer disease
  - Taking ASA, NSAIDs, anticoagulants, Pepto Bismol, or iron supplements
  - Significant consumption of black licorice
  - Significant alcohol history or hepatitis risk factors
  - Any other signs of bleeding (e.g. coffee ground emesis, hematemesis, hematochezia, or bright red blood per rectum)
  - Any dysphagia, abdominal pain, change in bowel movements, constitutional symptoms or signs/symptoms of significant blood loss
- Physical exam should include vitals (including postural if worried about GI bleeding) and a digital rectal exam for direct visualization of the stool to confirm, in addition to the remainder of the exam
- Initial labs to consider include CBC, BUN (may be elevated with upper GI bleeding), INR
- If the patient is actively bleeding, suggest calling GI on call and/or the ED for assessment, possible resuscitation, and possible endoscopic procedure.

3. Diagnosis

- Depending on local availability, test with the Hp Stool Antigen Test (HpSAT) or the Urea Breath Test (UBT).
  - HpSAT is the primary test for Hp in the Edmonton, Calgary, and South Zones.
- False positive results with both UBT and HpSAT are rare, but false negatives may result from recent use of antibiotics or anti-secretory drugs (PPI or H2-receptor antagonists).
- Accurate test results depend on proper preparation:
  - Patients should be off antibiotics for at least 4 weeks before the test.
  - Patients should not take bismuth preparations (e.g. Pepto Bismol) for 2 weeks before the test.
  - Patients should be off PPIs at least 3 days before the test, but preferably this should be 2 weeks.
  - Patients with symptoms may take antacids up to 24 hours before their test.
- Patient preparation instructions can be found at the following links:
  - DynaLIFE (HpSAT): dl.labqms.com/labFrame.asp?DID=9237&FLDVR=317
  - DynaLIFE (UBT): dynalife.ca/Portals/0/pdf/Patient%20instructions/Urea%20breath.pdf

4. Treatment

- Standard triple therapy regimens (HpPAC, PPI Clarithromycin with amoxicillin, or metronidazole) are no longer recommended due to changing resistance.²
- Pregnant and nursing women should not be treated for Hp.

---

• To determine the appropriate treatment regimen for children with Hp infection, consult a pediatric gastroenterologist through Specialist LINK or eReferral Advice Request (depending on local availability).
• For all other patients, treat as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helicobacter pylori treatment regimens for patients NOT ALLERGIC to penicillin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Round</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Second Round</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Third Round</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fourth Round</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**IMPORTANT:** Rifabutin has rarely been associated with potentially serious myelotoxicity (low white cell or platelet count). The pros and cons of fourth-line therapy should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helicobacter pylori treatment regimens for patients ALLERGIC to Penicillin/Amoxicillin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Round</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. PPI standard dose BID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bismuth subsalicylate 2 tabs QID (524mg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Metronidazole (500mg) four times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tetracycline (500mg) four times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Round</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pantoprazole (40mg) two times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Clarithromycin (500mg) two times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Metronidazole (500mg) two times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* It is recommended to give all Hp treatments in a blister pack to improve adherence.

5. **Confirm eradication**

• After treatment, patients should be retested for Hp, no sooner than 4 weeks after completing treatment. Retesting too soon risks a false negative test.
• The patient must be off all antibiotics (including antibiotics for Hp treatment) for at least 4 weeks and off PPIs for at least 3 days (preferably 2 weeks).
• Once cured, re-infection rate is <2%.
• If symptoms persist, refer to the Dyspepsia pathway for additional treatment options.
6. Treatment failure

- Treatment failure may be due to antibiotic resistance, but intolerance or non-adherence must also be explored with the patient.
- After treatment failure, there is no point in retrying the same regimen - see chart for next option.
- Referral to GI may be made after three failed rounds of treatment if the family physician does not feel comfortable assessing for/prescribing Rif-Amox treatment. In the referral, outline testing and treatment provided to date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist to guide in-clinic review of your patient with H. pylori AFTER treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Re-test with the Hp Stool Antigen Test (HpSAT) or the Urea Breath Test (UBT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- HpSAT is the primary test for Hp in the Edmonton, Calgary, and South Zones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Off antibiotics ≥ 4 weeks; off PPIs ≥ 3 days but preferably 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ If HpSAT/UBT remains positive, use an alternative treatment and retest again following treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ If HpSAT/UBT is negative, but symptoms persists, follow the Dyspepsia pathway and/or reassess diagnosis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Referral to GI may be made after three failed rounds of treatment if the family physician does not feel comfortable assessing for/prescribing PPI-Amoxicillin-Rifabutin treatment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BACKGROUND

About this Pathway

- Digestive health primary care pathways were originally developed in 2015 as part of the Calgary Zone’s Specialist LINK initiative. They were co-developed by the Department of Gastroenterology and the Calgary Zone’s specialty integration group, which includes medical leadership and staff from Calgary and area Primary Care Networks, the Department of Family Medicine and Alberta Health Services.
- The pathways were intended to provide evidence-based guidance to support primary care providers in caring for patients with common digestive health conditions within the medical home.
- Based on the successful adoption of the primary care pathways within the Calgary Zone, and their impact on timely access to quality care, in 2017 the Digestive Health Strategic Clinical Network led an initiative to validate the applicability of the pathways for Alberta and to spread availability and foster adoption of the pathways across the province.

Authors & Conflict of Interest Declaration

This pathway was reviewed and revised under the auspices of the Digestive Health Strategic Clinical Network in 2019, by a multi-disciplinary team led by family physicians and gastroenterologists. For more information, contact the DHSCN at Digestivehealth.SCN@ahs.ca.

Pathway Review Process

Primary care pathways undergo scheduled review every three years, or earlier if there is a clinically significant change in knowledge or practice. The next scheduled review is April 2022. However, we welcome feedback at any time. Please email comments to Digestivehealth.SCN@ahs.ca.

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Disclaimer
This pathway represents evidence-based best practice but does not override the individual responsibility of health care professionals to make decisions appropriate to their patients using their own clinical judgment given their patients’ specific clinical conditions, in consultation with patients/alternate decision makers. The pathway is not a substitute for clinical judgment or advice of a qualified health care professional. It is expected that all users will seek advice of other appropriately qualified and regulated health care providers with any issues transcending their specific knowledge, scope of regulated practice or professional competence.

PROVIDER RESOURCES
Advice Options
Non-urgent advice is available to support family physicians.

- Gastroenterology advice is available across the province via Alberta Netcare eReferral Advice Request (responses are received within five calendar days). Visit [www.albertanetcare.ca/documents/Getting-Started-Advice-Requests-FAQs.pdf](http://www.albertanetcare.ca/documents/Getting-Started-Advice-Requests-FAQs.pdf) for more information.

- Non-urgent telephone advice connects family physicians and specialists in real time via a tele-advice line. Family physicians can request non-urgent advice from a gastroenterologist:
  - In the Calgary Zone at [specialistlink.ca](http://specialistlink.ca) or by calling 403-910-2551. This service is available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays). Calls are returned within one (1) hour.
  - In the Edmonton Zone by calling 1-844-633-2263 or visiting [www.pcnconnectmd.com](http://www.pcnconnectmd.com). This service is available from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays and Christmas break). Calls are returned within two (2) business days.

Local Resources
As referenced in the algorithm and Expanded Details, local availability of testing for a diagnosis can vary in Alberta. Physicians should use the Hp Stool Antigen Test (HpSAT) or the Urea Breath Test (UBT).

- HpSAT is the primary test for Hp in the Edmonton, Calgary, and South Zones.
- False positive results with both UBT and HpSAT are rare, but false negatives may result from recent use of antibiotics or anti-secretory drugs (PPI or H2-receptor antagonists).
- Patient preparation instructions can be found at the following links:
  - DynaLIFE (UBT): [dynalife.ca/Portals/0/pdf/Patient%20instructions/Urea%20breath.pdf](http://dynalife.ca/Portals/0/pdf/Patient%20instructions/Urea%20breath.pdf)

Resources and References

|---|

PATIENT RESOURCES
Information

- Patient information sheets on each treatment regimen are below.
Taking CLAMET-PPI Treatment

What is CLAMET-PPI?
Your doctor has prescribed CLAMET-PPI treatment because you have an infection of the stomach (H. pylori). CLAMET-PPI treatment gets its name from the medicine in it (clarithromycin, amoxicillin, metronidazole, and a proton pump inhibitor).

How do I take CLAMET-PPI?

- Most people take CLAMET-PPI treatment without having any problems. If you’re pregnant or breastfeeding, you can’t take CLAMET-PPI treatment.
- You’ll need to take the medicine listed below for 14 days. To make it easier, ask your pharmacist to put your prescriptions in a bubble pack. CLAMET-PPI treatment costs about $130 if generic medicine is used.
- If you don’t take the treatment as recommended, it will not work as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>How Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarithromycin</td>
<td>500 mg (take 1 capsule)</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoxicillin</td>
<td>1000 mg (take 2 capsules)</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metronidazole</td>
<td>500 mg (take 1 tablet)</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proton pump inhibitor</td>
<td>take 1 pill</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do I need to know anything else about taking antibiotics?
Please speak to your pharmacist when you pick up your medications to treat the H. pylori infection. You can expect your pharmacist to provide you with information relating to each medication in the regimen shown above. You can discuss the benefits, potential interactions (food and medications to avoid), and adverse effects of your medication regimen with your pharmacist.
Taking BMT-PPI Treatment

What is BMT-PPI?

Your doctor has prescribed BMT-PPI treatment because you have an infection of the stomach (H. pylori). BMT-PPI treatment gets its name from the medicine in it (bismuth subsalicylate, metronidazole, tetracycline, and a proton pump inhibitor).

How do I take BMT-PPI?

- Most people take BMT-PPI treatment without having any problems. If you’re pregnant or breastfeeding, you can’t take BMT-PPI treatment.
- You’ll need to take the medicine listed below for 14 days. To make it easier, ask your pharmacist to put your prescriptions in a bubble pack. BMT-PPI treatment costs about $80 if generic medicine is used.
- If you don’t take the treatment as recommended, it will not work as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>How Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bismuth subsalicylate (Pepto-Bismol®)</td>
<td>524 mg (take 2 caplets)</td>
<td>4 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metronidazole</td>
<td>500 mg (take 1 tablet)</td>
<td>4 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetracycline</td>
<td>500 mg (take 1 capsule)</td>
<td>4 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proton pump inhibitor</td>
<td>take 1 pill</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do I need to know anything else about taking antibiotics?

Please speak to your pharmacist when you pick up your medications to treat the H. pylori infection. You can expect your pharmacist to provide you with information relating to each medication in the regimen shown above. You can discuss the benefits, potential interactions (food and medications to avoid), and adverse effects of your medication regimen with your pharmacist.
Taking LevoAmox-PPI Treatment

What is LevoAmox-PPI?

Your doctor has prescribed LevoAmox-PPI treatment because you have an infection of the stomach (H. pylori). LevoAmox-PPI treatment gets its name from the medicine in it (levofloxacin, amoxicillin, and a proton pump inhibitor).

How do I take LevoAmox-PPI?

- Most people take LevoAmox-PPI treatment without having any problems. If you’re pregnant or breastfeeding, you can’t take LevoAmox-PPI treatment.

- You’ll need to take the medicine listed below for **14 days**. To make it easier, ask your pharmacist to put your prescriptions in a bubble pack. LevoAmox-PPI treatment costs about $100 if generic medicine is used.

- If you don’t take the treatment as recommended, it will not work as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LevoAmox-PPI Treatment</th>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>How Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levofloxacin</td>
<td>250 mg (take 1 tablet)</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amoxicillin</td>
<td>1000 mg (take 2 capsules)</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proton pump inhibitor</td>
<td>take 1 pill</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do I need to know anything else about taking antibiotics?

Please speak to your pharmacist when you pick up your medications to treat the H. pylori infection. You can expect your pharmacist to provide you with information relating to each medication in the regimen shown above. You can discuss the benefits, potential interactions (food and medications to avoid), and adverse effects of your medication regimen with your pharmacist.
Taking RifAmox-PPI Treatment

What is RifAmox-PPI?
Your doctor has prescribed RifAmox-PPI treatment because you have an infection of the stomach (H. pylori). RifAmox-PPI treatment gets its name from the medicine in it (rifabutin, amoxicillin, and a proton pump inhibitor).

How do I take RifAmox-PPI?
- Most people take RifAmox-PPI treatment without having any problems. If you’re pregnant or breastfeeding, you can’t take RifAmox-PPI treatment.
- You’ll need to take the medicine listed below for 10 days. To make it easier, ask your pharmacist to put your prescriptions in a bubble pack. RifAmox-PPI treatment costs about $170 if generic medicine is used.
- If you don’t take the treatment as recommended, it will not work as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>How Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rifabutin</td>
<td>150 mg (take 1 tablet)</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoxicillin</td>
<td>1000 mg (take 2 capsules)</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proton pump inhibitor</td>
<td>take 1 pill</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do I need to know anything else about taking antibiotics?
Please speak to your pharmacist when you pick up your medications to treat the H. pylori infection. You can expect your pharmacist to provide you with information relating to each medication in the regimen shown above. You can discuss the benefits, potential interactions (food and medications to avoid), and adverse effects of your medication regimen with your pharmacist.
Taking Bismuth Quadruple Regimen

What is Bismuth Quadruple Regimen?

Your doctor has prescribed Bismuth Quadruple Regimen treatment because you have an infection of the stomach (*H. pylori*) and an allergy to penicillin. The Bismuth Quadruple Regimen includes the following medications: a proton pump inhibitor, bismuth subsalicylate, metronidazole, and tetracycline.

How do I take Bismuth Quadruple Regimen?

- Most people take Bismuth Quadruple Regimen treatment without having any problems. If you’re pregnant or breastfeeding, you can’t take Bismuth Quadruple Regimen.

- You’ll need to take the medicine listed below for **14 days**. To make it easier, ask your pharmacist to put your prescriptions in a bubble pack. The Bismuth Quadruple Regimen treatment costs about $80 if generic medicine is used.

- If you don’t take the treatment as recommended, it will not work as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>How Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proton pump inhibitor</td>
<td>take 1 pill</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bismuth Subsalicylate</td>
<td>524 mg</td>
<td>4 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metronidazole</td>
<td>500 mg</td>
<td>4 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetracycline</td>
<td>500 mg</td>
<td>4 times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do I need to know anything else about taking antibiotics?

Please speak to your pharmacist when you pick up your medications to treat the *H. pylori* infection. You can expect your pharmacist to provide you with information relating to each medication in the regimen shown above. You can discuss the benefits, potential interactions (food and medications to avoid), and adverse effects of your medication regimen with your pharmacist.
Taking Modified Triple Regimen

What is Modified Triple Regimen?

Your doctor has prescribed Modified Triple Regimen treatment because you have an infection of the stomach (H. pylori) and an allergy to penicillin. The Modified Triple Regimen includes the following medications: a proton pump inhibitor known as pantoprazole, clarithromycin, and metronidazole.

How do I take Modified Triple Regimen?

- Most people take Modified Triple Regimen treatment without having any problems. If you’re pregnant or breastfeeding, you can’t take Modified Triple Regimen.
- You’ll need to take the medicine listed below for 14 days. To make it easier, ask your pharmacist to put your prescriptions in a bubble pack. The Modified Triple Regimen treatment costs about $100 if generic medicine is used.
- If you don’t take the treatment as recommended, it will not work as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Dose</th>
<th>How Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pantoprazole</td>
<td>40 mg</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarithromycin</td>
<td>500 mg</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metronidazole</td>
<td>500 mg</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do I need to know anything else about taking antibiotics?

Please speak to your pharmacist when you pick up your medications to treat the H. pylori infection. You can expect your pharmacist to provide you with information relating to each medication in the regimen shown above. You can discuss the benefits, potential interactions (food and medications to avoid), and adverse effects of your medication regimen with your pharmacist.
A Patient’s Pathway for Managing H. pylori

What is Helicobacter pylori?
Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) is a type of bacteria which can infect the stomach. Having this bacteria increases the risk of pain or discomfort in the stomach, ulcers, and rarely stomach cancer.

H. pylori bacteria can cause ulcers by growing in the lining of the upper part of the stomach, producing inflammation and causing the stomach to be more easily damaged by stomach acid.

H. pylori is usually cared for by healthcare provider(s) in your family doctor’s office.

What is the H. pylori patient pathway?
It is a map for you and your healthcare provider(s) to follow. It makes sure the care you are receiving for H. pylori is safe and effective to manage your symptoms.

You and your healthcare provider(s) may modify the pathway to best suit your healthcare needs.

If symptoms cannot be managed over time and the infection cannot be cleared with medications, you and your healthcare provider(s) may decide a referral to a specialist would be helpful.

1. Check your symptoms
- Pain or discomfort in the upper part of the stomach, often associated with meals
- Feeling uncomfortably full after eating
- Loss of appetite

2. Tests that may be done
- Breath or stool test for a H. pylori infection in your stomach
- Blood tests
- Other tests are rarely needed

3. Treatment for H. pylori
- You will be given medications, including antibiotics and an acid blocker to clear the H. pylori infection.
- It is important you complete the full treatment.
- If you have side effects, speak to your healthcare provider(s) before stopping.
- When treatment is complete, follow up with your healthcare provider(s) to confirm the H. pylori is gone.
- Multiple rounds of treatment with different medications may be required.

Be sure to tell your healthcare provider(s) if you have these symptoms:
- Stool that is black in colour or has blood in it
- Trouble swallowing or pain while swallowing food
- Feeling that food gets stuck while swallowing
- Vomiting that doesn’t stop
- Vomiting with blood in it
- Unexpected weight loss

If your symptoms don’t improve, get worse, or keep interfering with your everyday activities, talk to your healthcare provider(s).

Once you find something that works for you, stick with it.
You may need to keep trying other options to find what works best to improve your health.
What do I need to know about my symptoms and H. pylori?

Working through the H. pylori patient pathway can take several months:

• Your healthcare provider(s) will ask you questions about your health and do a physical exam, including reviewing medicines you are taking.
• H. pylori is diagnosed/confirmed using a breath or stool test. Endoscopy is rarely needed.
• Medications are recommended to treat H. pylori.
• It is important you complete all the medications given to you in the treatment.
• Multiple rounds with different medications may be required.
• You also will need to follow up with your healthcare provider(s) to ensure the H. pylori infection has been cleared after completing treatment.

Seeing a specialist is only recommended if:

• Symptoms continue or get worse following multiple rounds of treatment and management options in the H. pylori pathway.
• Symptoms continue even after the H. pylori infection has been successfully cleared.
• Concerning test results or symptoms are identified by you and your healthcare provider(s).

You can find more information in the great resources below:

Canadian Digestive Health Foundation
www.cdhf.ca
* search H. pylori

My Health Alberta
myhealth.alberta.ca
* search H. pylori

Write any notes or questions you may have here:

If you have any feedback about this patient pathway, contact us at Digestivehealth.SCN@ahs.ca

* search H. pylori

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