Clinical guidelines recognise the role nutrition plays in the management of functional gastrointestinal disorders (FGIDs) in infants.

NICE guidance on regurgitation

In formula-fed infants with frequent regurgitation associated with marked distress, NICE recommends the following stepped-care approach:
1. Review feeding history
2. Reduce feed volumes, if excessive for the infant’s weight
3. Offer a trial of smaller, more frequent feeds while maintaining an appropriate total daily amount of milk (unless the feeds are already small and frequent)
4. Offer a trial of a thickened formula.
If the stepped-care approach is unsuccessful, the thickened formula should be stopped and the infant offered alginate therapy for a trial period of one to two weeks.

NICE clinical knowledge summary on colic

The guidance states that:
• The most useful intervention is support for parents and reassurance that infantile colic will resolve
• Soothing strategies should be attempted first, along with support and advice from health visitors. These are covered on the next page
• Medical treatments should only be tried if parents feel unable to cope.
NICE recognises that studies of interventions for infantile colic tend to lack methodological quality, making it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of any treatment. Low lactose and lactose-free formulas are not recommended as nutritional management options.

NICE clinical knowledge summary on constipation in children

The guidance states:
1. Check for faecal impaction and if present, treat using a recommended disimpaction regimen
2. Start maintenance laxative drug treatment if impaction is not present or has been successfully treated
3. Offer advice on behavioural interventions for children started on maintenance laxative drug treatment
4. Give diet and lifestyle advice and information on recommended fluid intake if needed.
Very little guidance is given specifically for formula-fed infants under six months of age with functional constipation.
### Infant Regurgitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevalence</th>
<th>30% of infants&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symptoms</td>
<td>Must include both of the following in otherwise healthy infants, aged three weeks to 12 months old:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Regurgitation two or more times per day for three or more weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. No retching, vomiting of blood, inhalation of food into the lungs (aspiration), cessation of breathing for 20 seconds or more (apnoea), failure to thrive, feeding or swallowing difficulties, or involuntary flexing or extension of the arms and legs (abnormal posturing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical advice</td>
<td>Try smaller teat size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wind the baby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feed smaller quantities more often</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feed the baby in upright position</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nothing too tight around baby’s tummy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutritional options for bottlefed infants</td>
<td>Anti-reflux formula, e.g. Aptamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anti-Reflux, Cow &amp; Gate Anti-Reflux or SMA Staydown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## MANAGEMENT OF FGIDs using the ROME III Diagnostic Criteria

### INFANT COLIC

- **20% of infants**
- Must include all of the following in infants from birth to four months of age:
  1. Bouts of irritability, fussing or crying that starts and stops without obvious cause
  2. Episodes lasting three or more hours/day and occurring at least three days per week for at least one week
  3. No failure to thrive

### FUNCTIONAL CONSTIPATION

- **15% of infants**
- Must include at least two of the following for one month, in infants up to four years of age:
  1. Two or fewer defaecations per week
  2. History of excessive stool retention
  3. History of painful or hard bowel movements
  4. Presence of a large faecal mass in the rectum
  5. History of large diameter stools, which may obstruct the toilet

Accompanying symptoms may include irritability, decreased appetite and/or early fullness during feeding (satiety). The accompanying symptoms disappear immediately following passage of a large stool.

### TREATMENTS

**INFANT COLIC**
- Comfort the baby
- Wind the baby
- Rub baby’s back or stomach
- Feed baby in upright position
- Partially-hydrolysed formula with GOS/FOS, e.g. Aptamil Comfort or Cow & Gate Comfort

**FUNCTIONAL CONSTIPATION**
- Don’t force baby to eat if they don’t want to
- Gently move baby’s legs in cycling motion
- Ensure adequate fluid intake in bottlefed babies
- Partially-hydrolysed formula with GOS/FOS, e.g. Aptamil Comfort or Cow & Gate Comfort
# MANAGING OTHER INFANT FEEDING PROBLEMS

## COWS’ MILK ALLERGY VS LACTOSE INTOLERANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevalence</th>
<th>Cows' Milk Allergy</th>
<th>Lactose Intolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5% of infants¹</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Symptoms

**Cows’ Milk Allergy**
- 1. Wheezing
- 2. Eczema
- 3. Vomiting/diarrhoea
- 4. Abdominal pain
- 5. Constipation
- 6. Reddening skin/itchy rash

**Lactose Intolerance**
- 1. Abdominal pain
- 2. Diarrhoea
- 3. Stomach bloating
- 4. Flatulence

### Practical Advice

**Cows’ Milk Allergy**
- Advise strict exclusion of cow’s milk from maternal diet, if breastfeeding
- Maternal supplementation of calcium (1000mg) and vitamin D (10mcg) daily

**Lactose Intolerance**
- Provide parents with practical tips about foods that may contain lactose

### Nutritional Options for Bottlefed Infants

**Cows’ Milk Allergy**
- Mild to moderate symptoms - prescribe an extensively hydrolysed formula, such as Aptamil Pepti
- Severe symptoms - prescribe an amino acid formula, such as Neocate

**Lactose Intolerance**
- Advice on dietary management of lactose intolerance e.g. lactose-free milk

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### RESOURCES

You can learn more about how Early Life Nutrition from conception to toddlerhood influences a baby’s present and future health at our website: [www.eln.nutricia.co.uk](http://www.eln.nutricia.co.uk)

You can access several CPD modules and factsheets for your own professional development to further your knowledge of Early Life Nutrition and common infant feeding problems. Our modules offer practical information to enable you to confidently provide parents and their babies with the care they need. You can access the modules at: [eln.nutricia.co.uk/CPD](http://eln.nutricia.co.uk/CPD)

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2. NICE. Clinical Knowledge Summary: Infantile colic (online). Available from: [https://cks.nice.org.uk/colic-infantile#topicsummary](https://cks.nice.org.uk/colic-infantile#topicsummary) (accessed Nov 2016)

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