Comparison of Recommendations in Clinical Practice Guidelines for Acute Gastroenteritis in Children

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JOURNAL OF PEDIATRIC GASTROENTEROLOGY AND NUTRITION
Volumen: 63
Número: 2
Páginas: 226-235
DOI: 10.1097/MPG.0000000000001133
Fecha de publicación: AUG 2016
Ver información de revista

Resumen

Objective: Acute gastroenteritis (AGE) is a major cause of child mortality and morbidity. This study aimed at systematically reviewing clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) on AGE to compare recommendations and provide the basis for developing single universal guidelines.

Methods: CPGs were identified by searching MEDLINE, Cochrane Library, National Guideline Clearinghouse and Web sites of relevant societies/organizations producing and/or endorsing CPGs.

Results: The definition of AGE varies among the 15 CPGs identified. The parameters most frequently recommended to assess dehydration are skin turgor and sunken eyes (11/15, 73.3%), general appearance (11/15, 66.6%), capillary refill time, and mucous membranes appearance (9/15, 60%). Oral rehydration solution is universally recognized as first-line treatment. The majority of CPGs recommend hypo-osmolar (Na+ 45-60 mmol/L, 11/15, 66.6%) or low-osmolality (Na+ 75 mmol/L, 9/15, 60%) solutions. In children who fail oral rehydration, most CPGs suggest intravenous hydration (66.6%). However, nasogastric tube insertion for fluid administration is preferred according to 5/15 CPGs (33.3%). Changes in diet and withdrawal of food are discouraged by all CPGs, and early refeeding is strongly recommended in 13 of 15 (86.7%). Zinc is recommended as an adjunct to ORS by 10 of 15 (66.6%) CPGs, most of them from low-income countries. Probiotics are considered by 9 of 15 (60%) CPGs, 5 from high income countries. Antiemetics are not recommended in 9 of 15 (60%) CPGs. Routine use of antibiotics is discouraged.

Conclusions: Key recommendations for the management of AGE in children are similar in CPGs. Together with accurate review of evidence base this may represent a starting point for developing universal recommendations for the management of children with AGE worldwide.
**Palabras clave**

**Palabras clave de autor:** acute diarrhea; children; guidelines

**KeyWords Plus:** DEHYDRATION SCALE; ACUTE DIARRHEA; SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS; NATIONAL CAUSES; MANAGEMENT; METAANALYSIS; VALIDATION; ONDANSETRON; CHILDHOOD; MORTALITY

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**Financiación**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entidad financiadora</th>
<th>Número de concesión</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United European Gastroenterology under a &quot;Mono-thematic Initiative&quot; educational grant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ver texto de financiación

**Editorial**

LIPPINCOTT WILLIAMS & WILKINS, TWO COMMERCE SQ, 2001 MARKET ST, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103 USA

**Categorías / Clasificación**

**Áreas de investigación:** Gastroenterology & Hepatology; Nutrition & Dietetics; Pediatrics
Categorías de Web of Science: Gastroenterology & Hepatology; Nutrition & Dietetics; Pediatrics

Información del documento

Tipo de documento: Article
Idioma: English
Número de acceso: WOS:000380943800016
ID de PubMed: 26835905
ISSN: 0277-2116
eISSN: 1536-4801

Información de la revista

• Impact Factor: Journal Citation Reports®

Otra información

Número IDS: DS7DU
Referencias citadas en la Colección principal de Web of Science: 75
Veces citado en la Colección principal de Web of Science: 0