Managing Secondary Lactose Intolerance Pathway

Healthier Together

NHS

Infant presenting with the following symptoms for 2 weeks or longer

- Loose and frequent (occ. green) stools
- Increased (explosive) wind
- Abdominal bloating

Usually following an infectious gastrointestinal illness

NOTE: *Lactose intolerance in young infants is* ***rare****.*

Cow's milk protein allergy (CMPA) should always be considered as an alternative diagnosis.

>12 months

Advise

①**Lactose free** milk (available from supermarkets e.g. Lactofree whole®, Alpro Growing Up Drink®)

②**Lactose free diet** (click here for parent information sheet)

0 - 12 months

Bottle Fed

Advise

(After 2 weeks of symptoms with no improvement)

Lactose free formula to be purchased from supermarket or pharmacy e.g.:

Aptamil LF®, SMA LF® Or Enfamil O-Lac®

And a lactose free diet if weaned (see diet sheet)

Breastfed

- Lactose intolerance in exclusively breast fed infants is rare.
- Consider cow's milk protein allergy (CMPA).
- Encourage breastfeeding. Mother may benefit from referral to breastfeeding specialist, Health Visitor or breastfeeding counsellor.

Review after 2 weeks - symptoms improved?

NO → Consider **alternative** diagnosis e.g. cow's milk protein allergy.

YES ↓

Lactose intolerance confirmed

- Continue lactose free formula / milk for up to **8 weeks** to allow resolution of symptoms.
- Then advise parents to **slowly re-introduce** standard formula/milk into the diet. (this is because lactase activity needs to be re-build after a period of exclusion)

Have symptoms returned on commencement of standard infant formula/milk?

YES → Return to lactose free formula / milk if ≤ 12m

Refer to dietitian/seek dietetic advice if concerned

NO ↓

No further action needed

Click here for additional guidance