

Pediatric Gastroenterology

51 Clinical Questions & Answers

is written in a different style to match the next generation of healthcare providers by providing point-by-point answers to varied situations they will encounter in their practice. It also provides suggested reading to get mastery on that particular question. The contributing authors are from multiple countries but know the local conditions and lay of the land, as the questions not only pertain to infectious conditions that the clinicians are so used to seeing but also many inflammatory and functional conditions that are taking up a lot of practice time and the care that these children need. The book is well versed to serve as a valuable source of knowledge to healthcare providers in many parts of the world.

Editor _____

Pankaj Vohra completed his MBBS and MD (Pediatrics) from All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, and went onto do his Fellowship in Pediatric Gastroenterology at the Mount Sinai Medical Center, New York. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Pediatrics and the American Board of Pediatric Gastroenterology. After practising as a pediatrician and pediatric gastroenterologist in New Delhi for about 18 years, he joined the Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology at University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA, as an Associate Professor three years ago.

He has varied interests and has been very active in promoting knowledge amongst the population and healthcare providers regarding celiac disease. He has a website celiacindia.org and authored a book *Celiac Disease: A Comprehensive Guide*, National Book Trust, India. He has published several papers in national and international journals and taken multiple talks around the country in various subjects related to pediatric gastroenterology.

His work motto is that the patient and the family should feel 50% better by the time they leave the clinic, if not physically but by the fact that they get some direction and have been empowered with knowledge and information and the next steps to help them get better.



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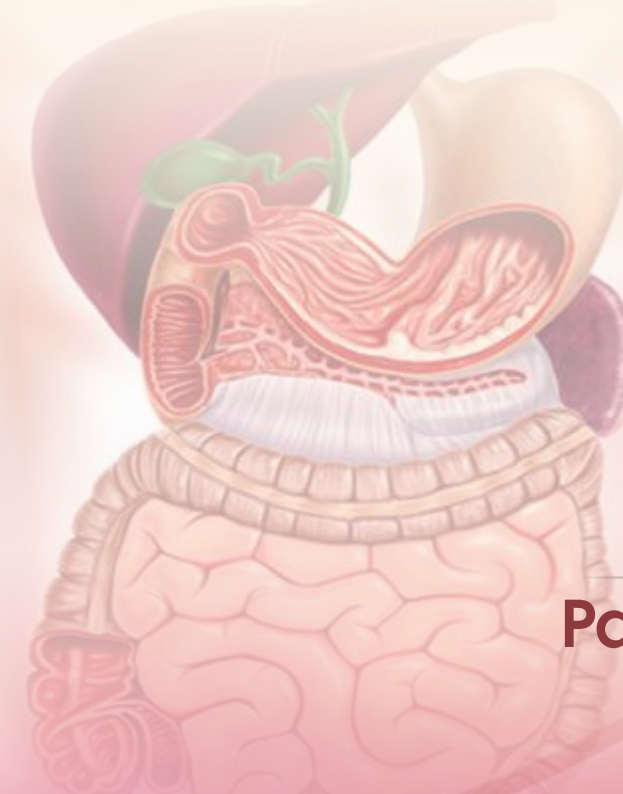
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51 Clinical Questions & Answers

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to

*all the children who have had to suffer from
various gastrointestinal complaints and
given us an opportunity to serve them and
learn from them with the aim that no other
child has to suffer for want of knowledge or expertise.*

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Foreword

When I picked up the book to go through it for the purpose of writing this Foreword, I thought I would run into the format of uniform chapters similar to other multiauthored books. This was not the case. But I was not surprised. The format is unique to the author and editor Pankaj Vohra. This book addresses 51 basic and practical questions, answers to which may not be simple, but are comprehensively compiled at one place and can be readily applied to your patient. The editor has allowed the answers to evolve scientifically and in evidence-based manner without compromising the practical appropriateness.

It is not a textbook to be read cover to cover, but to be read when faced with a challenging and complex clinical question.

Advances in technology and access to new knowledge have led to recognition of a large number of illnesses requiring the expertise of a pediatric gastroenterologist in low and middle income countries to deal with. Yes, there is a burden of infectious diarrhea and persistent diarrhea, but there are plenty of children with eosinophilic esophagitis or celiac disease or inflammatory bowel disease or gastrostomy tubes or children with delayed development who are living longer and need nutritional support or hepatitis C and rapidly rising number of children postliver transplant. A big component of patients seen by pediatric gastroenterologists today in the high income countries is functional disorders. We are not far behind here either. A number of questions and answers have been devoted to this very rapidly increasing and vast group of disorders. These children need a team of primary care providers and their specialists to manage them comprehensively and effectively.

The book thus reaches over to a wide range of clinical conditions to appeal a wide variety of healthcare professionals—medical students, interns, pediatric residents, family practitioners, practising physicians and budding and established pediatric gastroenterologists.

As it is a practical book, not too much emphasis has been given to referencing every sentence written, however, each chapter has a component of 'latest suggested readings'.

I would like this book to become a live document which is updated regularly for both the questions and their answers based on the latest evidence. The readers can importantly contribute to new and emerging clinical challenges. Pankaj and his team are very well equipped to respond pertinently.

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Preface

When I wrote my first book, I was quite sure that was going to be my last! But the urge came back. And this time it was in response to the rapidly expanding need in pediatric gastroenterology.

The key question was that there are several books in pediatric gastroenterology already out there, and with the internet in your pocket, who really wants to read a book when you can get everything you need within seconds. And that is exactly the reason why I thought about this book.

It is not truly a textbook but it answers 51 common questions in pediatric gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition.

Though I have been in this domain for long, I did not feel competent enough to be able to answer all the questions that came to my mind. Hence I sought out possible authors and to be fair and encourage the next generation of pediatric gastroenterologists, I invited potential authors from the very active and robust pediatric gastroenterology Google group that has many such budding doctors. I also aimed to get authors from the subcontinent, and from the Indian diaspora in North America, along with my colleagues at the University of New Mexico.

I then wrote up the 51 questions and gave the authors the question to answer based on their interest, my knowledge of their interest and their expertise which I researched from their writings and talks given at various national and international meetings.

What I got an amazing group of 47 authors (some wrote with a second author and some had more than 1 question to answer), who after some prodding and pushing sent me their responses and though I did try to make them more uniform, I did not want to change the 'essence' of what they wrote.

My aim is that all MBBS students, pediatric residents, all practicing doctors who look after children, pediatric gastroenterologists in training and in practice, keep the book handy, and when the need arises find your patient-related query, find the answer and help treat the child. It remains as a go-to repository for all times.

As there are authors from Sri Lanka, Canada, the USA and India, there are and expect there to be differences in approach and management. There is going to be some overlap too, but no contradictions. The focus may also vary, and in my opinion that is what makes this book different and more interesting to read.

I also aimed to avoid referencing everything that was written, as the personal expertise of the authors was important to me and they are experts in their own fields. However, to give a bigger picture, 'Suggested Reading' at the end of each answer should suffice in case your curiosity got the better of you.

Change is constant. Healthcare is way too important to not be a leader in this change. It is possible that by the time this book reaches you, recommendations have changed, for example, the expanding role of oral agents approved for HCV in children has literally exploded from the time I put forth that question till the time I sent it to the publisher. But the principles of treatment have not changed.

Every child is unique even though he or she may carry the same diagnosis and the onus is on us to help alleviate the suffering of each patient.

Remember that there is a difference between an illness and a disease—an illness is what ailment the patient comes with and he goes out with is a disease—but the two should meet. Keep in mind that common illnesses are common, but do not narrow your diagnosis so much that you cannot think of out the box.

And finally, something my father who practiced medicine for over 60 years said, “if your patient is not feeling half better by the time he leaves your office or you leave his hospital room, you need to improve yourself further”. I hope this book gives us that opportunity.

Pankaj Vohra

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And finally, Swasti—my wife of 29 years, who has had to put up with my eccentricities for that much time and even more while putting this book together.

Pankaj Vohra

Contents

List of Contributors	vii
Foreword by Narendra K Arora	xi
Preface	xiii
<hr/>	
1. How to Diagnose and Manage Cow Milk Protein Allergy? <i>Aniruddh Setya, Priyanka Nair</i>	1
<hr/>	
2. Which Growth Curves should I use in Different Age Groups and How should I Interpret them Including Z Scores? What are the Fallacies of Looking at BMI? <i>Anju Virmani</i>	8
<hr/>	
3. Obesity is Becoming Very Common in My Practice—Can I Prevent it and How should I Treat It? <i>Anju Virmani</i>	12
<hr/>	
4. How should I Approach a 4-Month-Old Infant with Bloody Stools? <i>Narendra Yallanki, Anupama Chawla</i>	16
<hr/>	
5. My 6-Year-Old Patient was Diagnosed with Eosinophilic Esophagitis (EoE) and was Referred to Pediatric Allergist for Further Testing: What should be My Approach? <i>Michelle Tobin, Anupama Chawla</i>	21
<hr/>	
6. How should I Follow a Child with Chronic Liver Disease? <i>R Bhanu Vikraman Pillai</i>	25
<hr/>	
7. How Common are Enteric Parasites and How Often should I be Investigating/ De-Worming My Patients? <i>Bhaswati C Acharyya</i>	32
<hr/>	
8. How do I Approach a 14 Years Old Girl Who Presents with Bleeding Per Rectum with and without Diarrhea and When to Refer to a Specialist? <i>Nirmala Dheivamani</i>	37
<hr/>	
9. How should I Supplement Nutrition in Children with Cerebral Palsy? <i>Durga Prasad</i>	44
<hr/>	
10. How should I Approach a Four-Week-Old Jaundiced Infant? <i>Kannan Ramaswamy</i>	50
<hr/>	
11. What is DILI and What should I Know About It? <i>Quais Mujawar</i>	58
<hr/>	
12. Which Patient of Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C should I be Treating and with What? <i>A. Riyaz</i>	65
<hr/>	

-
- | | |
|---|-----|
| 13. When should I Suspect Inflammatory Bowel Disease and How to Differentiate it from Tuberculosis? | 71 |
| <i>Malathi Sathiyasekharan</i> | |
| 14. What is the Management of Infants Born to Mothers with Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C Infection? | 77 |
| <i>Malathi Sathiyasekharan</i> | |
| 15. When should I Worry about the Constipation Being Non-functional in Origin and How should I Proceed? | 82 |
| <i>Shrish Bhatnagar</i> | |
| 16. I am Evaluating a 6-Year-Old Who Comes to the Casualty with Several Episodes of Vomiting and Needs Admission for IV Fluids. What should I be doing if this was the First Episode versus Several Similar in the Past? | 89 |
| <i>Jacqueline Fridge</i> | |
| 17. How to Investigate and Manage Acute Recurrent Pancreatitis and Chronic Pancreatitis? | 96 |
| <i>Kalyan Ray Parashette</i> | |
| 18. An Asymptomatic Teenager has been Found to have Elevated Transaminases. How should I Proceed? | 103 |
| <i>Rohit Kohli</i> | |
| 19. What is the Management of a 6 Years Old Girl Who Presents with Hematemesis? | 107 |
| <i>Lalit Bharadia, Amarlok Kumar</i> | |
| 20. How should I Approach and Treat Non-bilious Vomiting/Reflux in a 2-Month-Old Baby? | 114 |
| <i>Vijendra Chaturvedi, Lalit Bharadia</i> | |
| 21. How should I Investigate and Treat Recurrent Iron Deficiency Anemia in a 6 Years Old Child? | 120 |
| <i>Laxmi Kant Bharti, Sumit Kumar Singh</i> | |
| 22. I am Following a 14 Years Old Girl with Wilson's Disease Who is on D-Penicillamine Therapy. How should I be Monitoring this Child? | 126 |
| <i>Aabha Nagral</i> | |
| 23. Parents of a Child with Autism want me to Start him on a Gluten-free Casein-free (GFCF) Diet. What is the Consensus on GFCF Diet for these Children and What Advise should I be giving them? | 130 |
| <i>Prasanth KS</i> | |
| 24. A 12 Years Old Boy Reports Upper Abdominal Pain with Nausea. He was Treated for <i>Helicobacter pylori</i> Gastritis 3 Months Ago after having had an Upper Endoscopy for Similar Complaints. What should be my Next Steps? | 134 |
| <i>Rajmohan Dharmaraj</i> | |
| 25. What is the Management of Asymptomatic Gallstone/s in an 8 Years Old Child? | 138 |
| <i>Ramesh Srinivasan</i> | |
-

26. What is the Management of Mild to Moderate Inflammatory Bowel Disease? <i>Alexander Koral</i>	140
27. What is the Management of Persistent Diarrhea? <i>Pankaj Vohra, Shinjini Bhatnagar</i>	150
28. I am seeing a 2 Months Old Baby with an Ileostomy following Surgery for NEC Where almost Half the Intestine was Resected. How should I Approach this Baby? <i>Reema Gulati</i>	153
29. A 5 Months Old Baby is given Rice for the First Time and has a Violent Reaction with Excessive Vomiting and Dehydration. What could this be and How should I Proceed with Weaning? <i>Razan Alkhouri</i>	160
30. Rapid Clinical Interpretation of Liver Function Tests in the Pediatric Patient <i>Ricardo O. Castillo</i>	164
31. An 8-year-old Patient Vomits Several Times a Day after Meals and has Lost Weight. What Condition could this be and What should My next Steps be? <i>Sakshi Karkra</i>	169
32. How should I Approach a Child with a Liver Abscess? <i>Vikrant Sood</i>	175
33. When should I Suspect Celiac Disease in a Child? <i>Pankaj Vohra</i>	180
34. How should I Investigate and Treat Celiac Disease? <i>Pankaj Vohra</i>	182
35. When to Refer an Infant with Diarrhea to a Pediatric Gastroenterologist? What Work-up should be Considered Prior to the Referral? <i>Ritu Walia</i>	186
36. I Practice in a Rural Town in India and the Nearest Tertiary Care Center is 6 Hours Away. A Premature Child with Cerebral Palsy has had a Gastrostomy Tube Placed. Please Tell How I should Manage this Tube, What should I Look out for, What are the Different Kinds of Tubes and How should the Baby be Fed? <i>Reema Gulati</i>	189
37. My 15 Years Old Patient is Losing Weight. How should I Approach this and Initiate Treatment? <i>Rimjhim Shrivastava</i>	199
38. When should I be Referring a Pediatric Patient for Diagnostic or Therapeutic Endoscopy? <i>Rishi Bolia</i>	206
39. What is the Approach to a Child Whose Parents Complain that He or She Refuses to Eat? <i>Sarath Gopalan</i>	211

40.	What is the Current Role of Probiotics? <i>Shaman Rajindrajith, Pankaj Vohra</i>	220
41.	A 5-Year-Old Girl Presents with Acute Onset Jaundice. What Investigations, Treatment and Follow-up are Suggested? When should I Refer this Child to a Transplant Centre? <i>Shivani Deswal</i>	222
42.	What are the Health Care Maintenance Issues in Children and Adolescent with Inflammatory Bowel Disease? <i>Sufla Saxena</i>	228
43.	What are the Various Health Care Maintenance Issues for a Pediatrician in a Child Post-liver Transplantation? <i>Vidyut Bhatia</i>	235
44.	Is there a Role for Blenderized Formulas in Our Patients? <i>Neelanjana Singh</i>	241
45.	Is there a Rationale for the Different Types of Formulas and Supplements Available in the Market Today? <i>Neelanjana Singh</i>	244
46.	Which Patient Needs to Get a Lipid Panel and a Practical Approach to Dyslipidemia? <i>Nidhi Rawal</i>	251
47.	My 10 Years Old Patient is Complaining of Post-prandial Upper Abdominal Pain. How should I Proceed? <i>Shaman Rajindrajith, Niranga M. Devanarayana</i>	257
48.	Does Irritable Bowel Syndrome Occur in Children? How to Diagnose and Manage it? <i>Sudipta Misra</i>	264
49.	Recurrent Abdominal Pain is Very Common in Children: How should I Approach and Manage It? <i>Sudipta Misra</i>	269
50.	There is a Concern of a Foreign Body Ingestion in a 2 Years Old Child. How should I Proceed? <i>Vishnu Biradar</i>	273
51.	Pharmacology of Commonly used Drugs in Pediatric Gastrointestinal Conditions <i>Priyanka Nair, Aniruddh Setya</i>	287
	<i>Index</i>	<i>297</i>