

Paediatric Pearls

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Put together by: Dr Julia Thomson, Consultant Paediatrician, julia.thomson@bartshealth.nhs.uk

Previous editions are all available at www.paediatricpearls.co.uk

A child can usually be classed into one of three groups:

- high probability** – diagnosis of asthma likely
- low probability** – diagnosis other than asthma likely
- intermediate probability** – diagnosis uncertain

See next month for the next steps in assessment and management. All from [BTS 2014 guideline](#).

Asthma diagnosis is more likely if....

- More than one of the following symptoms: wheeze, cough, difficulty breathing, chest tightness, particularly if these symptoms:
 - are frequent and recurrent
 - are worse at night and in the early morning
 - occur in response to, or are worse after, exercise or other triggers, such as exposure to pets, cold or damp air, or with emotions or laughter
 - occur apart from colds
- Personal history of atopic disorder
- Family history of atopic disorder and/or asthma
- Widespread wheeze heard on auscultation
- History of improvement in symptoms or lung function in response to adequate therapy

While.....

- Symptoms with colds only, with no interval symptoms
- Isolated cough in the absence of wheeze or difficulty breathing
- History of moist cough
- Prominent dizziness, light-headedness, peripheral tingling
- Repeatedly normal physical examination of chest when symptomatic
- Normal peak expiratory flow (PEF) or spirometry when symptomatic
- No response to a trial of asthma therapy
- Clinical features pointing to an alternative diagnosis

...suggest asthma less likely.

Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. [WHO August 2014](#)

[Maudsley Learning on line](#) is a social learning platform devised by the Maudsley Hospital team to enable everyone to learn more about mental health and well-being. A useful and young-people-accessible [cartoon video of mental well-being](#) explains that we all have days when we feel angry, upset, sad and frustrated but that we have a responsibility to look after our own mental health in order to achieve our full potential. The charity, Mind, has some excellent information on ["the talking therapies"](#) – useful for preparing young people and their families for a CAMHS referral.

October is over so none of us here in the UK are now making any **Vitamin D**. Our stores need to last us till April 2016, longer if we have darker toned skin. Did you top up over the summer with at least 20 minutes per day in bright sunlight? Or did you live like a mole at your place of work? Did your children play football in the park every day or did they sit inside playing on their electronic gadgets? Young children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, adults and children with disabilities and everyone over the age of 65 should be on a vitamin D supplement and this is especially important over the winter period. Dr Jini Halder, paediatric registrar at Whipps Cross University Hospital, writes all about it at <http://www.paediatricpearls.co.uk/2015/11/potted-background-assessment-and-management-of-vitamin-d-deficiency/>

Barts Health Vitamin D deficiency protocol [available here](#). UK DoH [advice on vitamin D supplementation here](#).

HYPERMOBILITY WITH THANKS TO DR JOE WARD, PAEDIATRIC SPR AT WHIPPS CROSS

= SYNOVIAL JOINTS MOVING BEYOND NORMAL RANGE OF MOVEMENT. DEFINED BY THE **BEIGHTON SCORE**:^{1,2} (SEE [LINKED FULL ARTICLE](#) FOR REFERENCES)

- FIFTH FINGER METACARPOPHALANGEAL JOINT EXTENSION >90° (ONE POINT FOR EACH SIDE (IMAGE 5))
- ABILITY TO TOUCH THUMB TO FOREARM (ONE POINT FOR EACH SIDE (IMAGE 4))
- ELBOW EXTENSION >10° (ONE POINT FOR EACH SIDE (IMAGE 2))
- KNEE EXTENSION >10° (ONE POINT FOR EACH SIDE (IMAGE 3))
- ABILITY TO TOUCH PALMS FLAT TO FLOOR WITH KNEES STRAIGHT (ONE POINT (IMAGE 1))

SCORES OF 4 OR ABOVE INDICATE **GENERALISED JOINT HYPERMOBILITY**. MAY BE ASYMPTOMATIC, OR ASSOCIATED WITH JOINT PAIN (EXACERBATED BY EXERCISE), DISLOCATIONS AND FATIGUE. CHRONIC PAIN OFTEN LEADS TO MUSCLE WEAKNESS. OTHER ASSOCIATIONS INCLUDE DIZZINESS AND SYNCOPE AND GASTROINTESTINAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS CHRONIC ABDOMINAL PAIN AND CONSTIPATION. [READ ON...](#)

