



## ***Helicobacter pylori* Testing in Children**

This clinical update outlines a change in approach to laboratory testing of *H. pylori* infection in children.

Currently a significant proportion of *H. pylori* faecal antigen requests received by Pathlab come from children under 16 years, however local and international guidelines for children (references given below) recommend that investigation and subsequent treatment for *H. pylori* should be limited to patients with a high level of suspicion of peptic ulcer disease and should be diagnosed endoscopically. Screening children with non-invasive markers of *H. pylori*, including stool antigen test, is NOT recommended, other than to document successful eradication.

**In line with these recommendations, please note that effective 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020, faecal antigen testing for *H. pylori* in persons under 16 years will be restricted to those requests where specialist approval has been gained from a Paediatrician or Gastroenterologist.**

This policy is already in place or being considered for implementation in several other diagnostic laboratories within New Zealand.

**Please contact us if you have any questions with regards to the above on [ClinicalMicrobiology@pathlab.co.nz](mailto:ClinicalMicrobiology@pathlab.co.nz).**

### **References:**

<https://www.starship.org.nz/guidelines/helicobacter-pylori-h-pylori-infection/>;

[https://journals.lww.com/jpgn/Fulltext/2017/06000/Joint\\_ESPGHAN\\_NASPGHAN\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_the.33.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/jpgn/Fulltext/2017/06000/Joint_ESPGHAN_NASPGHAN_Guidelines_for_the.33.aspx)

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CLINICAL UPDATE

**Please ensure all members of your institution receive a copy of this clinical update.**