



## Intussusception

### **What is intussusception?**

Intussusception is where a part of the bowel folds into the part of the bowel right next to it, or “telescoping,” causing a blockage of the bowel. This blockage would cause your child to be sick with vomiting and decreased appetite.

### **Who gets intussusception?**

Intussusception can occur in a child of any age, but mostly occurs in children younger than one year of age. Intussusception is three times more likely to occur in boys than girls. No one truly knows why this condition occurs.

### **How is intussusception diagnosed?**

Intussusception is diagnosed with a physical exam, the history of your child’s illness, and special X-rays. All of these tests help the doctor diagnose your child’s condition.

### **How can I expect intussusception to be treated?**

The doctor may order additional X-rays (air contrast enema), and some of these X-rays (air contrast enema) may fix the intussusception.

The air contrast enema is an X-ray during which an amount of air can be pushed into the bowel by the doctor which may fix the folding that has occurred. This is called “reducing” the intussusception. If the intussusception is reduced, your child will eventually be able to drink and eat normally as your doctor allows.

If this test does not work, your child’s doctor will discuss surgery to correct the intussusception and prevent any damage to the bowel.

### **How is the decision made that surgery is needed?**

Surgery is needed if the air contrast enema does not reduce the intussusception or if the bowel is injured during the procedure air contrast enema.

### **When may my child be ready to go home?**

Your child will be able to go home when your child does not have a temperature over 101 F, is able to eat and can take pain medicines by mouth.

### **What care is needed at home after surgery?**

*Activity:* Your child may eat and drink as usual. Your child may return to school in 3-4 days after discharge, if you need a school excuse please let us know. No P.E., sports, bicycle riding or lifting more than 20 pounds until your child is seen for the postoperative check-up or postoperative phone call.

*Medications:* You will be given a prescription for pain medicine, if needed, or you may give your child Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Motrin) for pain. If this does not relieve the pain call our office.

*Care of the incision:* The incision is covered by a bandage(steri-strips) or surgical glue. The stitches are under the skin and will not have to be removed. They will dissolve (melt) in 6-8weeks. If the steri-strips have not fallen off in 5-7 days, you may remove them.

*Bathing:* 2-3 days after surgery, your child may shower or have a shallow bath. Pat the incision dry if it gets wet. 7 days after surgery, your child may bathe as usual.

### **When should I call the surgery team?**

A temperature over 101F.

Drainage or increasing pain at the incision site.

If your child begins to show the same symptoms as before, as sometimes the intussusception may recur.

### **When should my child return to surgery clinic?**

Your child's follow-up appointment will be in 2-4 weeks. You will be given your appointment when discharged or it will be mailed to you.

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If you have any questions or problems, please call

Monday-Friday 8am – 4:30pm 501-364-4852 Surgery Specialty Nurses

After hours and weekends 501-364-1100 Ask for Surgeon On Call

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10/14/08 Pediatric Surgery Specialty Nurses and Nurse Practitioner

Adapted from [www.apsna.org](http://www.apsna.org)