



# The Surprising Chronicity of Abdominal Pain in Children

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## HOW IT WORKS

In each issue, the *Annals* selects an article or articles and provides discussion tips and questions. We encourage you to take a RADICAL approach to these materials and to post a summary of your conversation in our online discussion. (Open the article online and click on "TRACK Comments: Submit a response.") You can find discussion questions and more information online at: <http://www.AnnFamMed.org/AJC/>.



## CURRENT SELECTION

### Article for Discussion

Lisman-van Leeuwen Y, Spee LAA, Benninga MA, Bierma-Zeinstra SMA, Berger MY. Prognosis of abdominal pain in children in primary care—a prospective cohort study. *Ann Fam Med*. 2013;11(3):238-244.

### Discussion Tips

This cohort study gives us a chance to see the big picture about abdominal pain in children that otherwise would become apparent only across a professional lifetime and then only with great attention.

## Discussion Questions

- What are the study's research questions and hypotheses, and why do they matter?
- How does this study advance beyond previous research and clinical practice on this topic?
- How strong is the study design for answering the question?
- To what degree can the findings be accounted for by:
  1. How patients were selected, excluded, or lost to follow-up over multiple time points?
  2. How the main variables were measured?
  3. Confounding (false attribution of causality because 2 variables discovered to be associated actually are associated with a 3rd factor)?
  4. Chance?
  5. How the findings were interpreted?
- How were possible biases controlled for in analyses?
- How do the sensitivity analyses affect your confidence in the findings?
- What are the main study findings?
- Does it surprise you how often pain is chronic among children complaining of abdominal pain?
- How comparable is the study sample to similar patients in your practice? What is your judgment about the transportability of the findings?
- How might the findings of this study affect your diagnostic approach to children complaining of abdominal pain?
- How might the findings of this study influence how you talk with parents and children complaining of abdominal pain?
- How might this study change your practice?
- What researchable questions remain?

## References

1. Stange KC, Miller WL, McLellan LA, et al. *Annals Journal Club: It's time to get RADICAL.* *Ann Fam Med*. 2006;4(3):196-197. <http://annfammed.org/cgi/content/full/4/3/196>.

