

Guideline for the Diagnosis of Paediatric Coeliac Disease

Consider testing for CD with the following symptoms, signs and conditions:

GASTROINTESTINAL

- Chronic or intermittent diarrhoea/ constipation/abdominal pain
- Distended abdomen
- Recurrent nausea and/or vomiting

EXTRAIESTINAL

- Irritability, fatigue, misery
- Weight loss/failure-to-thrive
- Delayed puberty, amenorrhea
- Neuropathy
- Arthritis/arthralgia
- Chronic iron-deficiency anaemia
- Decreased bone mineralization (osteopenia/osteoporosis), repetitive fractures
- Dermatitis herpetiformis-type rash
- Dental enamel defects
- Persistent abnormal liver biochemistry
- First-degree relatives with CD
- Autoimmune conditions: T1DM, thyroid disease, liver disease
- Down syndrome
- Turner syndrome
- Williams syndrome
- IgA deficiency

NOTES ON TESTING

- Serum tTG is standard serological test
- The upper limit of normal (ULN) varies according to the test used
- EMA is the most useful confirmatory test. It does not need to be repeated on a second sample if already reported positive on the first sample, especially in a typically symptomatic patient. A second sample is advisable in an asymptomatic patient
- Children must be on daily gluten for minimum 6 weeks to interpret biopsy accurately, and probably a number of months for accurate serology
- Negative EMA means coeliac disease is unlikely. Weak positive EMA is essentially indeterminate and therefore uninformative – consider referral for biopsy
- Total IgA should be requested with tTG – to exclude IgA deficiency and associated false negative result
- HLA testing is not discriminatory in Irish children

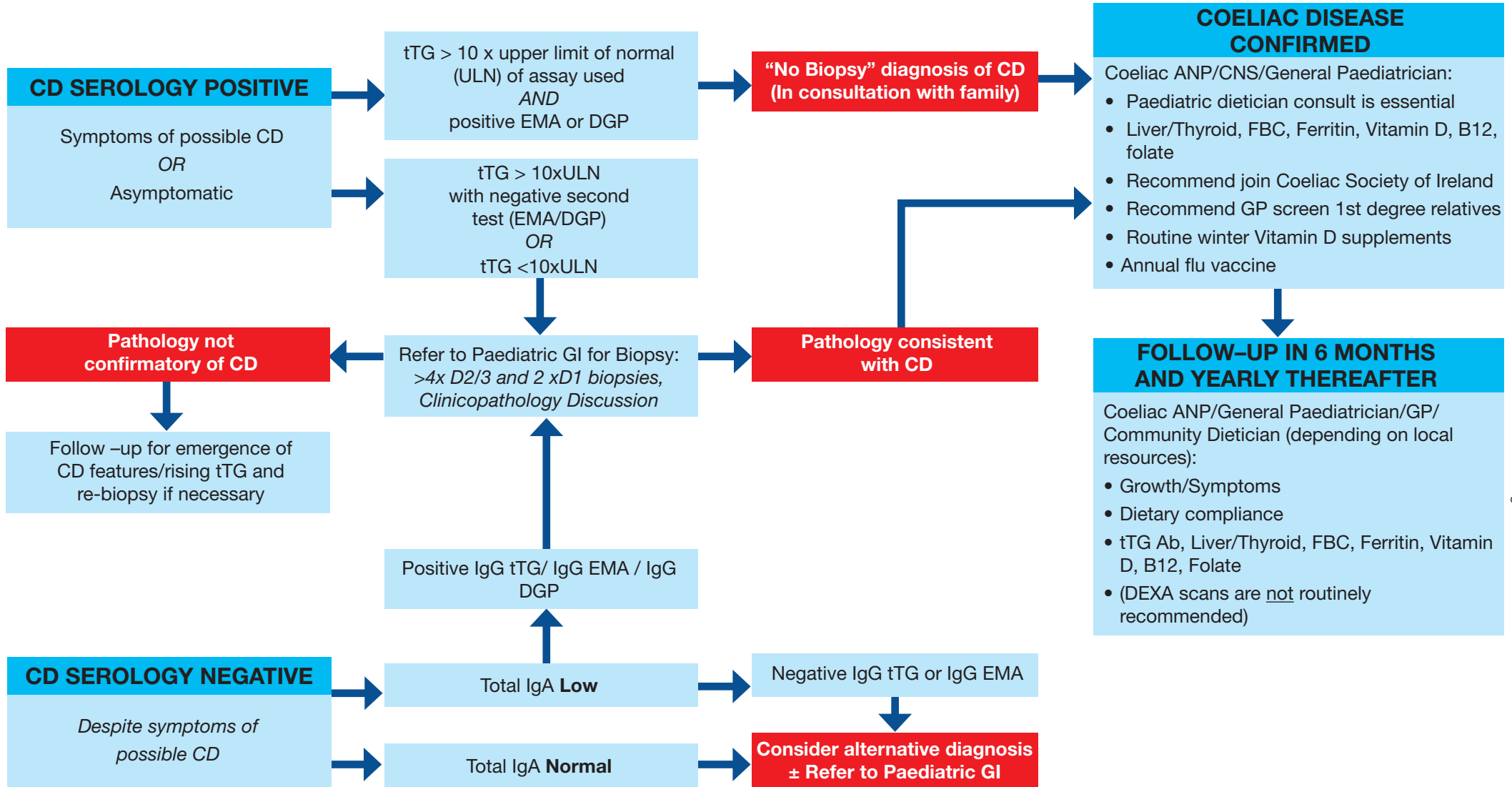
ATYPICAL PRESENTATIONS

- Low positive tTG, <2xULN in asymptomatic children can be repeated in 6 months – once >2xULN or symptoms develop, refer for biopsy
- Children <2yrs, or those with diabetes or T21 should be managed as per children without these conditions
- Children already started on GFD who do not fulfill “no biopsy” criteria should be counselled and referred for biopsy following 6 week gluten challenge

ABBREVIATIONS

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|----------------------------------|---|
| • ULN upper limit of normal | • DGP deamidated gliadin peptides (available in only a few areas) |
| • EMA anti-endomysial ab | • ANP advanced nurse practitioner |
| • tTG tissue transglutaminase ab | |

CD Diagnostic Algorithm For Irish Children



REFERENCES:

1. ESPGHAN Guidelines for Diagnosing Coeliac Disease 2020. J Pediatr Gastroenterol Nutr. 2020 Jan;70(1):141-156.
2. ESPGHAN position paper on management and follow up of children and adolescents with coeliac disease. J Pediatr Gastroenterol Nutr. 2022 Sep 1;75(3):369-386.