

Differential Diagnosis of Gastrointestinal (GI) Bleeding in Children Based on Clinical Presentation

Hematemesis

- Swallowed blood
- Epistaxis, pharyngitis, breast feeding, dental work, tonsillectomy
- Vitamin K deficiency in neonate
- Erosive esophagitis
- Mallory-Weiss tear
- Hemorrhagic gastritis
- Trauma, surgery, burns, or severe systemic stress (patients in intensive care units)
- Reactive gastritis
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, alcoholic gastritis, cocaine ingestion, ingestion of caustic substances, stress, mechanical trauma, viral infection, Crohn disease, vasculitis (Henoch-Schönlein), radiation, bezoar, hiatal hernia, prolapse of the gastroesophageal junction, or congestive gastropathy
- Peptic ulcer
- Variceal bleeding: associated with portal hypertension
- Submucosal masses
- Lipoma, stromal tumors, duplication
- Vascular malformation
- Angiodysplasia, hemangioma, Dieulafoy lesion
- Hemobilia

Hematochezia, Melena

- Intestinal ischemia
- Complicated intussusception, mid-gut volvulus, incarcerated hernia, or mesenteric thrombosis
- Meckel diverticulum
- Upper GI source: *see hematemesis*
- Vasculitis
- Henoch-Schönlein purpura
- Sloughed polyp
- Intestinal or colonic ulcer
- NSAID gastropathy, Crohn disease
- Ulcerative colitis
- Vascular malformation

Rectal Bleeding With Signs of Colitis (Bloody Diarrhea, Tenesmus, Nighttime Stooling)

- Infectious colitis
- Consider *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Yersinia enterocolitica*, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, *Aeromonas hydrophilia*, *Klebsiella oxytoca*, *Clostridium difficile*, *Neisseria gonorrhoea*, *Cytomegalovirus*, *Entamoeba histolytica*, *Trichuris trichiura*
- Hemolytic-uremic syndrome
- Necrotizing enterocolitis
- Eosinophilic proctocolitis
- Inflammatory bowel disease Ulcerative colitis, Crohn disease

Rectal Bleeding With Normal Stool Pattern

- Juvenile polyp
- Nodular lymphoid hyperplasia
- Eosinophilic colitis
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Vascular malformation

Bright Red Blood Coating Normal or Hard Stool

- Anal fissure
- Beta-hemolytic streptococcal cryptitis
- Ulcerative proctitis
- Rectal prolapse
- Solitary rectal ulcer
- Internal hemorrhoids

Occult GI Blood Loss

- Esophagitis
- Reactive gastritis
- Acid peptic disease
- Eosinophilic gastroenteritis, colitis
- Celiac disease
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Polyposis
- Meckel diverticulum
- Vascular malformation