

Flow Chart for managing Faltering Growth

Faltering growth can be defined as any of the following (DoH, 2009; Shaw 2015):

- No catch up from low birth weight
- Weight falling through 2 centiles space
- Weight or length falls below 0.4th centile
- Crossing down through length / height centiles as well as weight
- Weight is 2 centiles or more below length centile (low weight for height)

Use clinical judgement

Ensure UK WHO growth charts are used

Is there an underlying condition that has been detected AND treated?

Acute/chronic illness, Safeguarding issue, Feeding issues, GORD, Coeliac disease...?

YES

NO

① Check feeding pattern:

Latching, frequency, duration and tolerance, feed preparation, volumes taken...
Solid foods intake, timing, quantity and frequency (if ≥6m)

If simple measures above not successful

Is infant weaned?

NO

YES

Referral to paediatrician

② Consider High Calorie infant formula:

- **Infatrini[®]**
- **Similac High Energy[®]**

Suitable for infants up to 18months or 8-9kg

③ Referral to paediatrician and /or paediatric dietitian

- Ideally, **Health Visitor** to observe mealtimes
- **Give simple advice** around managing any behavioural aspects (see appendix 'What can I do if my child won't eat' leaflet)
- Ensure parents/carers are given **advice on high calorie foods** (see appendix 'Introducing high energy solids')

If simple measures above not successful
Refer to paediatrician

Monitor growth (length and weight) to ensure catch up growth and discontinue when weight is 1 centile deviations above length to maximise growth and minimise excessive weight gain

Faltering growth additional notes

Symptoms and diagnosis

- It is not a condition in itself – there are lots of different possible explanations, with feeding problems being the most common.
- UK WHO growth charts should be used to plot weight, length and head circumference.
- The height/length of an infant needs to be measured to properly interpret changes in pattern.
- If a child is not growing at the expected rate, it is important that this is picked up at an early stage and the reasons investigated. E.g. acute illness, iron deficiency anaemia, CMPA, Coeliac disease, GORD or a child safeguarding issue.
- In the vast majority of cases, there isn't an underlying medical problem and a baby can be successfully treated at home.
- Crossing down centiles might not be a cause for concern, e.g. in babies from mothers with gestational diabetes. **Use your clinical judgement.**

Treatment

- 6 months and over:** Ensure appropriate solids are offered at regular intervals; ask about volume and frequency of milk and solids food. Once a food routine is established, milk intake should be around 500-600mls a day. More than that may compromise appetite for solids.
- Under 6 months:** Ensure appropriate frequency and volume of feeds, as well as preparation technique. An infant's requirements are around 150mls/kg/day and most will need one or more feeds during the night.
Only then consider prescribing an equivalent volume of high energy formula to the child's usual intake of regular formula or breastmilk (but advise to continue breastfeeding) until an assessment has been performed and recommendations made by a paediatrician or paediatric dietitian.

Review and discontinuation of treatment

- All infants on high energy formula will need growth (weight and height/length) monitored monthly to ensure catch up growth occurs.
- Paediatric dietitians or paediatricians will advise if/when the formula should be stopped.

	Formula	Presentation	Cost*	Cost per 100Kcal	Details
1 st Line	Similac High Energy [®] (Abbott Nutrition)	60mls	£0.66	£1.09	100Kcal/100mls From birth up to 8kg
		200mls	£2.13	£1.05	
	Infatrini [®] (Nutricia)	200mls	£2.31	£1.16	
125mls		£1.46	£1.16		
2 nd	SMA High Energy [®]	250mls	£2.46	£1.08	91Kcal/100mls
	Infatrini Peptisorb [®] (Nutricia)	200mls	£3.54	£1.77	For malabsorption with or without allergy

*MIMS January 2017

Useful resources for parents and health professionals

- NHS choice website: www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/Pages/help-baby-enjoy-foods.aspx
- Royal college of Paediatric and Child health website for WHO growth charts and tutorial: www.rcpch.ac.uk/growthcharts

NICE is currently working on a "Recognition and management of faltering growth in children" guideline. The expected publication is October 2017