HIGH DIAGNOSTIC YIELD OF UPPER ENDOSCOPY IN CHILDREN WITH SEVERE IRON DEFICIENCY ANEMIA OF UNEXPLAINED CAUSE.

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Upper endoscopy identified an etiology in 72% of children hospitalized with severe unexplained iron deficiency anemia (hemoglobin <7 g/dL), predominantly gastritis including Helicobacter pylori and collagenous gastritis.

KEY POINTS

- A retrospective study of 25 children (mean age 10.7 years, 76% female) with hemoglobin <7 g/dL who underwent upper endoscopy between 2016 and 2022 found diagnostic abnormalities in 18/25 (72%), with 15 having no gastrointestinal symptoms.
- Histopathology demonstrated gastritis in 18/25 (72%), including 9 cases of Helicobacter pylori, 5 collagenous gastritis, 1 lymphocytic gastritis, and 3 non-specific gastritis; celiac disease was found in one patient.
- Endoscopic findings included gastric nodularity, erosions or polyps in 17/25 (68%) and duodenitis or ulcers in 3/25 (12%).
- During follow-up, hemoglobin levels remained stable in 23/25 (92%) after initial treatment with intravenous iron infusions (84%), blood transfusion (12%), or oral iron, with only two requiring repeat iron therapy.
- The authors conclude that upper endoscopy should be included in the diagnostic investigation of severe unexplained IDA in children, particularly relevant for pediatric gastroenterologists and hematologists managing such cases.

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