



## **CLINICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRONIC GASTRITIS IN CHILDREN**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of the study was to investigate the clinical and endoscopic features of chronic gastritis in children. A total number of 84 children aged 7 to 16 years were examined. It was established that the clinical picture is characterized by pain, dyspeptic symptoms, and asthenoneurotic syndromes, the severity of which correlated with the morphological activity of the inflammatory process and the presence of *Helicobacter pylori* infection. Endoscopically, superficial and focal forms of gastritis predominated; morphological examination revealed mucosal infiltration by lymphocytes and plasma cells, as well as epithelial dystrophic changes.

### **Keywords**

chronic gastritis, children, clinical manifestations, endoscopy, *Helicobacter pylori*.

### **Introduction**

Chronic gastritis is one of the most common digestive system diseases in children. According to the World Health Organization, the prevalence of chronic gastritis and gastroduodenitis in childhood reaches 30–40%, and in adolescence this figure increases to 60%. In Uzbekistan, according to the Ministry of Health, gastrointestinal diseases account for up to 18% of all chronic illnesses in children, with gastritis and gastroduodenitis making up more than half.

Chronic gastritis in children has a number of features: early onset, association with *H. pylori* infection, high risk of ulcer development, as well as a significant impact on the child's physical and psycho-emotional development. The variability of symptoms and absence of pathognomonic signs complicate early diagnosis and lead to a delayed start of therapy.

Studying the clinical features of chronic gastritis in children has practical significance for optimizing diagnosis and choosing rational therapy.

### **Purpose of the Study**

To investigate the clinical, endoscopic, and morphological features of chronic gastritis in school-age children.

### **Materials and Methods**

Study site: Pediatric Gastroenterology Department, Samarkand City Children's Hospital No. 1.

Participants: 84 children aged 7–16 years (mean age:  $11.2 \pm 0.4$  years).

- Main group: 64 children with chronic gastritis.
- Control group: 20 practically healthy children without gastrointestinal pathology.



**Inclusion criteria:**

- Clinical manifestations of dyspepsia or pain syndrome.
- Confirmed diagnosis of chronic gastritis (endoscopy + morphology).

**Methods:**

- Clinical examination (complaints, history, objective findings).
- Stomach endoscopy with biopsy.
- Morphological examination of biopsy samples.
- H. pylori detection (urease test, cytology).
- Laboratory tests (CBC, biochemistry).

Statistical data processing was performed using SPSS 20.0. Differences were considered significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

**Results**

**Clinical manifestations:**

The main symptoms in children with chronic gastritis were:

- Epigastric pain — 81.2%
- Dyspeptic disorders (nausea, heartburn, bloating) — 68.7%
- Decreased appetite — 45.3%
- Astheno-neurotic syndrome — 39.0%

**Endoscopic findings:**

- Superficial gastritis — 57.8%
- Focal gastritis — 23.4%
- Atrophic changes — 18.8%
- H. pylori detected in 65.6%

**Morphological findings:**

- Lymphocytic and plasmacytic mucosal infiltration — 72%
- Epithelial dystrophy and desquamation — 48%
- Focal glandular atrophy — 18.8%

In H. pylori-associated gastritis, more severe inflammatory changes, higher infiltration, and erosions were more common.

**Discussion**

The study results showed that the clinical manifestations of chronic gastritis in children are polymorphic and nonspecific. Symptoms are often masked as functional gastrointestinal disorders, which is consistent with Russian authors.

A high prevalence of H. pylori infection was confirmed in children with chronic gastritis (65.6%), in line with foreign studies reporting infection rates of 60–70%.



Endoscopic data revealed the predominance of superficial and focal forms of gastritis, but atrophic changes were diagnosed in 18.8% of cases. This is significant, as atrophy is associated with ulcer risk and impaired gastric secretory function.

Morphological findings confirmed the leading role of inflammatory changes and their relationship with *H. pylori*. These data are consistent with European studies showing that infection promotes increased mucosal infiltration and accelerates disease progression.

Thus, comprehensive diagnosis (clinical + endoscopy + morphology + *H. pylori* detection) is essential for timely identification of chronic gastritis in children.

### **Conclusion**

Chronic gastritis in children is characterized by a combination of pain, dyspeptic, and astheno-neurotic syndromes, the severity of which depends on the endoscopic form and the presence of *H. pylori* infection.

- The most common form is superficial gastritis (57.8%); less common is atrophic gastritis (18.8%), associated with more severe progression.
- Morphological study confirms the leading role of inflammatory changes and *H. pylori* infection in gastritis development.
- Comprehensive examination with mandatory *H. pylori* testing is required for timely diagnosis.

### **Ethics**

The study was approved by the local ethics committee of Samarkand State Medical University. Informed consent was obtained from parents of the children.

### **Funding**

The study was carried out at the authors' own expense.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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