

# Lymphadenopathy Pathway

Clinical assessment/management tool for children with Lymphadenopathy



## Management – Combined Acute and Primary Care

### LYMPHADENOPATHY (LAN) IN CHILDREN

**Also think about...TB**  
Is there a history of TB exposure, travel to a high risk area - discuss concern with [local paediatric team](#)

	Green – low risk	Amber – intermediate risk	Red – high risk
Size	Less than 2cm	<p><b>Lymphadenitis / lymph node abscess</b> – painful, tender unilateral LN swelling. Overlying skin may be red/hot. May be systemically unwell with fever.</p> <p><b>EBV</b> – cervical or generalised LAN, exudative pharyngitis, fatigue, headache +/- hepatosplenomegaly.</p> <p><b>Atypical mycobacterial infection</b> – non-tender, unilateral LN enlargement, systemically well. Most common between 1-5 years of age. Progresses to include overlying skin discolouration. Consider mycobacterium tuberculosis – any risk factors?</p> <p><b>Cat-scratch disease</b> – usually axillary nodes following scratch to hands in previous 2 weeks. Highest risk with kittens.</p>	Larger than 2cm and growing
Site	Cervical, axillary, inguinal		Supraclavicular or popliteal nodes especially concerning
History	Recent viral infection or immunisation		Fever, weight loss, night sweats, unusual pain, pruritis
Examination	Eczema, Viral URTI		Hepatosplenomegaly, pallor, unexplained bruising

**Green Action**

- Reassure parents that this is normal - improves over 2-4 weeks but small LNs may persist for years
- No tests required
- Provide [advice leaflet](#)

**LAN due to poorly controlled eczema**

- Generalised LAN extremely common
- Optimise eczema treatment
- If persists, check full blood count and blood film and/or refer to general paediatric outpatients
- Provide [advice leaflet](#)

**Amber Action**

- If lymphadenitis, treat with 7 days of Co-amoxiclav .
- Review progress after 48 hours. If remains febrile, may need drainage
- If systemically unwell or suspected LN abscess, phone paediatrician-on-call.
- If suspected atypical mycobacterial infection associated with disfigurement, refer to ENT clinic.
- Consider blood tests as appropriate such as FBC, blood film, EBV serology, LDH, CRP and blood culture
- Consider TB testing
- Provide [advice leaflet](#)

**Differential includes malignancy (leukaemia / lymphoma) and rheumatological conditions (JIA / SLE / Kawasaki disease)**

- Urgent referral to paediatric team
- Consider investigations as in amber category
- Consider ultrasound scan and urgent ENT referral