

International Conference on

Pediatric Gastroenterology and Pediatric Practices

June 15-16, 2016 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Functional gastrointestinal disorders (FGIDs) in children: A developing country insight

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Functional gastrointestinal disorders (FGIDs) include a variable combination of age dependent, chronic or recurrent gastrointestinal symptoms not otherwise explained by structural or biochemical abnormalities. Although FGIDs have been extensively studied, the exact etiology is not fully understood. Parents are confused with the vague explanation of why is this happening. Patients are frustrated even with the fact that no serious cause for the real pain they feel. A number of theories have been put forth, including autonomic nervous system instability, visceral hyperalgesia, intestinal dysmotility and stressful life events, none of which alone can explain the condition. FGID has become a major health issue in Jordanian children. One of four children between the ages of 11 and 15 years exhibits at least one abdominal pain-predominant FGID. The most common form of abdominal pain-predominant FGID in our children was IBS. Females are affected more often than males. Intestinal and extra-intestinal symptoms are seen regularly with abdominal pain-predominant FGIDs. Diagnosis of FGIDs in children is not standardized and may vary between countries. It is essential to correctly diagnose these disorders in order to optimize the use of economic resources and avoid unnecessary investigations. Treatment options for these disorders are limited and even not standardized. In developing countries, dealing with this rolling down snowball is exhausting and will have enormous pressure on both health systems and care givers.

Biography

Eyad Mahmoud Altamimi is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the Faculty of Medicine at Mutah University, Jordan. He has completed his Pediatric Gastroenterology training at McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada. His most recent research focused on functional pediatric gastrointestinal disorders.

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