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Constipation and diarrhoea

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Constipation and diarrhoea are very frequently presented in primary care practice, but in the majority of patients they represent temporary symptoms, with benign prognosis. Diarrhoea is most frequent in childhood, and usually caused by viral infections, Constipation may be a chronic problem, especially in elderly patients, and is often related to lifestyle and dietary habits, or a side effect of medication. Although additional testing and referral is not required for the majority, both diarrhoea and constipation can exceptionally be the first presentation of serious GI disease, such as inflammatory bowel disease or coeliac disease in young patients with diarrhoea, and bowel cancer in older patients with sudden onset constipation. In this presentation current primary care management of constipation and diarrhoea will be discussed.