

DIAGNOSING GROWTH HORMONE DEFICIENCY (GHD)

A diagnosis of GHD can typically involve several steps.

Below is a general guide:



1. Consult your Pediatrician

Start by scheduling an appointment. They will take a detailed medical history, conduct a physical examination, and assess your child's growth patterns. Most formal diagnoses come from a pediatric endocrinologist.



2. Growth Charts

Your pediatrician may use growth charts to track your child's growth over time. If there's a significant deviation from the normal growth curve, it could be an indicator of a growth hormone (GH) issue.



3. Blood Tests

A GH stimulation test, also known as a "Stim Test," may be performed. Your child will be given a medicine that should make their body produce a burst of GH. Blood will then be drawn at times over the next 2-5 hours to check the GH levels to try to catch the peak. Low GH levels confirm the diagnosis of growth hormone deficiency. In addition to the Stim Test, other blood tests may be conducted to evaluate different factors that could affect growth.



4. Imaging Studies

In some cases, imaging studies like MRI or CT scans may be recommended to examine the structure of the pituitary gland, which is responsible for producing GH.



5. Bone Age Assessment

X-rays of your child's hand and wrist may be taken to assess bone age, which can provide information about your child's growth potential.



6. Genetic Testing

In certain cases, genetic testing may be recommended to identify any underlying genetic causes of GHD.

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