Flank Pain

Pain is a symptom of something that is wrong in the body. Flank or side pain refers to pain that is located on the side of the body between the upper abdomen and the back. There may be little difference between pain caused by a bone or muscle problem and pain that is caused by a kidney, bladder infection or a kidney stone. Flank pain with fever and urinary symptoms may mean a kidney infection (*pyelonephritis*) is present.

CAUSES

Some of the more common causes of flank pain include:

- Injury.
- Kidney problems:
  - Acute pyelonephritis.
  - Kidney stone (a stone can form from gout or elevated calcium levels among other things). The pain from a kidney stone is unbearable. It comes in sharp, stabbing waves or spasms. It often radiates into the groin or testicle in a male.
  - A collection of pus in a kidney (*kidney abscess*).
- Inflammation or soreness of the gallbladder (*Cholecystitis*).
- Shingles (*Herpes Zoster*) a rash that appears on one side of the body and is caused by a herpes infection.
- Osteoarthritis
  - Disk disease
  - Muscle spasm
- Diabetes mellitus
  - Peripheral nerve damage (*neuropathy*).
- An inflammation of the pancreas (*pancreatitis*).

DIAGNOSIS

Blood and urine tests along with specialized x-rays will help your caregiver determine what is wrong.

TREATMENT

The treatment of pain depends on the cause.

Your caregiver will determine what treatment will work best for you.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop abdominal pain or swelling.
- You feel faint or pass out.
- You develop a fever over 102º F (38.9º C).

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