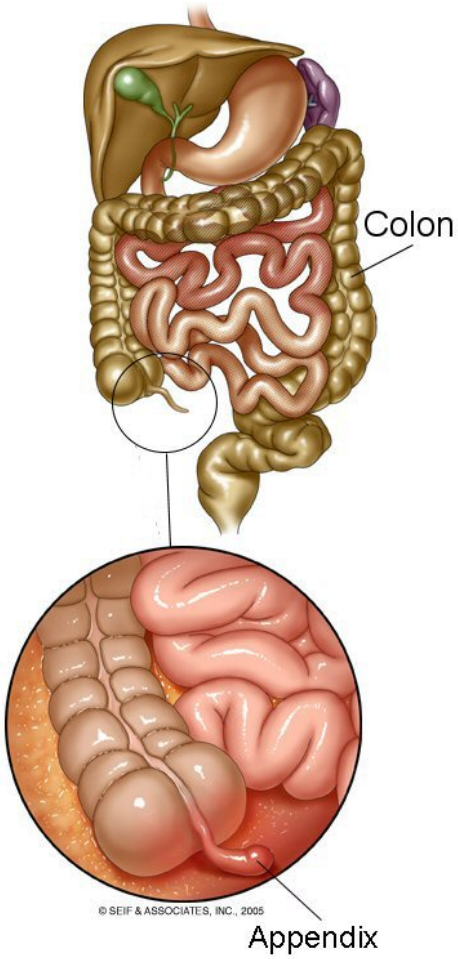
Appendicitis

Appendicitis is when the appendix is inflamed (swells up) and fills with pus.



CAUSES

There is not always an obvious reason why appendicitis occurs. Some causes may include:

- Infection in the intestine.
- A blockage in the appendix.

SYMPTOMS

- Pain around your belly button (navel) and can move towards your lower right belly (*abdomen*). The pain can become more severe and sharp as time passes.
- Tenderness in the lower right abdomen. Pain gets worse if you cough or make a sudden movement.
- Feeling sick to your stomach (*nauseous*).
- Throwing up (*vomiting*).
- Constipation.
- Diarrhea.
- Abdominal swelling.
- Fever.
- Loss of appetite.

DIAGNOSIS

- Physical exam.
- Blood tests.
- Urine test.
- X-rays or a CT scan may confirm the diagnosis.

TREATMENT

Once the diagnosis of appendicitis is made, the appendix needs to be removed. This is done surgically by making a cut (*incision*) in the lower right abdomen.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- The pain does not go away or becomes severe.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Repeated vomiting occurs.
- The pain becomes localized in the lower right abdomen (possibly appendicitis).
- You have bright red or black tarry stools.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 12/18/2006 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011
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