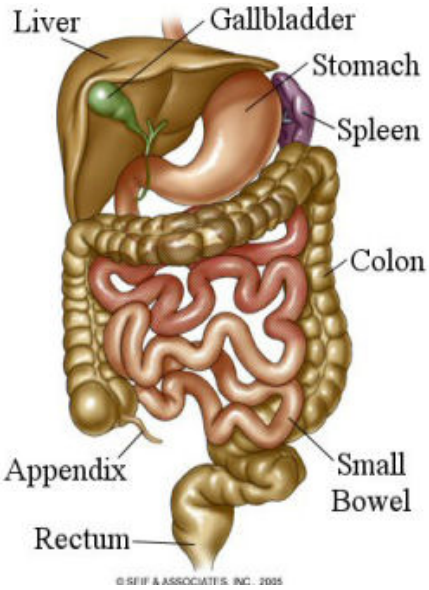
Abdominal Pain (Nonspecific)

Your exam might not show the exact reason you have abdominal pain. Since there are many different causes of abdominal pain, another checkup and more tests may be needed. It is very important to follow up for lasting (*persistent*) or worsening symptoms. A possible cause of abdominal pain in any person who still has his or her appendix is acute appendicitis. Appendicitis is often hard to diagnose. Normal blood tests, urine tests, ultrasound, and CT scans do not completely rule out early appendicitis or other causes of abdominal pain. Sometimes, only the changes that happen over time will allow appendicitis and other causes of abdominal pain to be determined. Other potential problems that may require surgery may also take time to become more apparent. Because of this, it is important that you follow all of the instructions below.



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Rest as much as possible.
- **Do not** eat solid food until your pain is gone.
- **While adults or children have pain:** A diet of water, weak decaffeinated tea, broth or bouillon, gelatin, oral rehydration solutions (ORS), frozen ice pops, or ice chips may be helpful.
- **When pain is gone in adults or children:** Start a light diet (dry toast, crackers, applesauce, or white rice). Increase the diet slowly as long as it does not bother you. Eat no dairy products (including cheese and eggs) and no spicy, fatty, fried, or high-fiber foods.
- Use no alcohol, caffeine, or cigarettes.
- Take your regular medicines unless your caregiver told you **not** to.
- Take any prescribed medicine as directed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver. **Do not give aspirin to children.**

If your caregiver has given you a follow-up appointment, it is very important to keep that appointment. Not keeping the appointment could result in a permanent injury and/or lasting (*chronic*) pain and/or disability. If there is any problem keeping the appointment, you must call to reschedule.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your pain is not gone in 24 hours.
- Your pain becomes worse, changes location, or feels different.
- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher**.
- You have shaking chills.
- You keep throwing up (*vomiting*) or cannot drink liquids.
- There is blood in your vomit or you see blood in your bowel movements.
- Your bowel movements become dark or black.
- You have frequent bowel movements.
- Your bowel movements stop (become blocked) or you cannot pass gas.
- You have bloody, frequent, or painful urination.
- You have yellow discoloration in the skin or whites of the eyes.
- Your stomach becomes bloated or bigger.
- You have dizziness or fainting.
- You have chest or back pain.

MAKE SURE YOU:

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

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