

Abdominal Pain

The abdomen is the area from the bottom of your rib cage to your pelvic (hip) bones. It contains many organs, including your:

- › stomach
- › small and large bowel
- › liver
- › pancreas
- › kidneys
- › reproductive organs

Abdominal pain can be caused by many things, including:

- › indigestion
- › constipation (not being able to poop)
- › gas
- › infection (either bacterial or viral)
- › food poisoning
- › ulcers
- › appendicitis
- › gallbladder or liver disease
- › kidney stones
- › bladder infections
- › menstrual pain
- › muscle spasms (muscle movements you cannot control)

Because there are so many organs in the abdomen, it is sometimes hard to find the cause of the pain.

Your exam and test results today suggest there is nothing seriously wrong or life-threatening at this time. Most abdominal pain goes away without treatment. Sometimes the problem takes a few days to develop before the cause can be understood. It is possible for your symptoms to get worse or not show signs of getting better. **If this happens to you, it is important that you see your primary health care provider or return to the Emergency Department.**

Instructions

1. Rest until you feel better.
2. Take your temperature every 4 hours while you are awake. **If your temperature is over 38° C (100.4° F) or under 36° C (96.8° F), call your primary health care provider or return to the Emergency Department.**
3. Do not take any medications, including laxatives or pain killers, without talking about it with your primary health care provider or pharmacist first.
4. Drink plenty of clear fluids if you can (water, diluted [watered down] juice, broth). Avoid coffee, tea, or alcohol, as these can make the pain worse. Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day.

5. Once the pain is gone, eat bland foods such as white rice, white bread, crackers, plain baked potatoes, bananas, or applesauce.

Do not eat or drink:

- › fried or spicy foods
- › bran
- › candy
- › foods that cause gas, such as raw vegetables
- › alcohol
- › milk products

6. You may start eating your normal foods again 2 or 3 days after your pain goes away. Eat small amounts often throughout the day instead of large meals.

If you are prescribed medication for pain, drink lots of fluids as these medications can sometimes cause constipation. Call your primary health care provider or talk with your pharmacy if you feel you may be constipated.

Follow-up instructions

Make an appointment to see your primary health care provider within 7 days (1 week).

See your primary health care provider or return to the Emergency Department right away if you notice any of the following:

- › Your pain gets worse, or it is now only in one specific area
- › You are vomiting (throwing up) often
- › You vomit blood (may look like coffee grounds)
- › You find blood in your poop. Blood can make poop look black
- › Your abdomen becomes swollen and/or is firm to the touch
- › You have a temperature over 38° C (100.4° F)
- › You have a hard time peeing
- › You feel short of breath
- › You feel dizzy
- › **You have any other symptom out of the ordinary that you are worried about**

*Prepared by: Emergency Services
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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.
If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.