

2014

# Abdominal Pain

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The abdomen is the area from the bottom of your rib cage to your groin. Abdominal pain can be caused by many things, such as ulcers, appendicitis, gallbladder disease, kidney stones, or bladder infections. However, most of the time this kind of pain is caused by gas, constipation, indigestion, or similar uncomfortable reasons which are not life-threatening.

Today your examination and test results suggest there is nothing seriously wrong or life-threatening at this time. It is possible for your symptoms to get worse or not show signs of improvement. If this happens to you, it is important that you return to or see your doctor.

## Instructions:

1. Rest until you feel better.
2. Take your temperature every 4 hours while you are awake. If your temperature is over 38.5°C (101.3°F), call your family doctor or return to the Emergency Department.
3. Do not take any medications, including laxatives or pain killers, without talking about it with a doctor first.
4. Drink plenty of fluids if you can. Start by drinking clear fluids such as flat ginger ale, water, tea, broth, Gatorade®, and Jell-O® for the first 24 hours or until your pain is gone.

5. Once the pain is gone, eat bland foods such as rice, cooked cereals, clear soup, bread, crackers, baked potatoes, bananas, or apple sauce. Do not eat fried or spicy foods, bran, candy, or drink alcohol or milk products. It is also a good idea to avoid foods that cause gas such as cabbage and raw vegetables.
6. Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day.
7. You may begin eating your normal foods again 2 or 3 days after your pain goes away. Eat small amounts frequently throughout the day instead of large meals.

## Medications

The checked boxes are your instructions:

- Medications advised: \_\_\_\_\_
- Continue these routine medications:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If you are prescribed medication for pain, drink lots of fluid as they can sometimes cause constipation. Call your family doctor if you feel you may be constipated.**

## Follow-up instructions

Make an appointment to see your family doctor within 7 days.

If you have any questions, please ask.  
We are here to help you.

**Return immediately or see your family doctor if you have:**

- More pain or it is now only in one specific area.
- Vomiting, especially if it has bits that looks like coffee grounds (small, dark brown particles).
- Blood in your bowel movements or bowel movements that are black in colour.
- A swollen “belly” and/or it is firm to the touch.
- A temperature over 38.5°C (101.3°F).
- A hard time passing urine (peeing).
- Shortness of breath.
- Pain does not go away.
- Any other symptom out of the ordinary that you are worried about.

**Looking for more health information?**

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.  
For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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