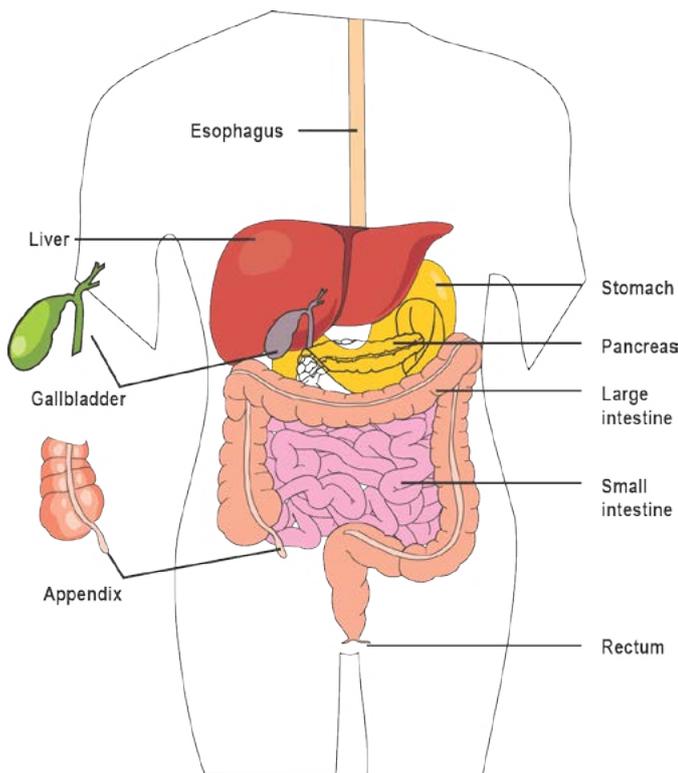


# Abdominal pain

## What is the abdomen?

The space between the chest and pelvis is called the abdomen. The abdomen contains the digestive organs, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, pancreas, liver and gall bladder. It also contains the kidneys and spleen. At the back, the abdomen is supported by the spine, and in the front, the abdominal skin and muscles protect the abdomen.



## What is abdominal pain?

Abdominal pain is a common complaint and most people will experience it during their lives. It is often commonly called stomach pain. While most abdominal pain is non-specific and not serious, sometimes it may be a sign of a serious illness. Also there are

so many organs within the abdomen that pain may be caused by any of them. Pelvic organs too may be the cause of abdominal pain.

## What are the common causes of abdominal pain?

- Bloating and wind trapping
- Pain with diarrhea (gastroenteritis) can be due to viral/bacterial infection or irritable bowel disease

## What are the causes of severe acute pain in abdomen?

- Appendicitis
- Perforation of peptic ulcer
- Gall stones
- Kidney stones
- Abdominal injury

## What are the causes of long standing or recurring pain in abdomen?

Although a doctor must be consulted for a long standing or chronic pain in abdomen, it is generally not an emergency.

The causes are:

- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Crohn's Disease
- Urinary Tract infection
- Peptic ulcer disease
- Constipation
- Pain associated with menstruation
- Anxiety and stress



# Abdominal pain

Right		Left
Gall stones Stomach Ulcer Pancreatitis	Stomach Ulcer Heart Burn/GERD Pancreatitis Gall stones	Stomach Ulcer Duodenal Ulcer Pancreatitis
Kidney stones Urine infection Constipation	Pancreatitis Early Appendicitis Stomach Ulcer IBD	Kidney stones Urine infection Constipation IBD
Appendicitis Constipation Pelvic pain	Urinary tract infection IBD Pelvic pain Appendicitis	Pelvic pain Diverticular disease

## What are the investigations to be carried out for abdominal pain?

- Blood tests
- Stool test
- Urine tests
- Barium swallow or enema
- Gastroscopy/colonoscopy
- Ultra sound of the abdomen and pelvis
- CT scan

## What are the questions that you must answer for abdominal pain?

- Type of pain – dull ache/cramp/burning/sharp pain/stabbing
- Severity of pain – mild/severe
- Duration of pain – sudden onset/longstanding
- Location of pain – localized to a particular area or throughout the abdomen
- Time of the pain – during the day, early morning, at night
- Relation to food, alcohol, menstruation
- Radiation of pain – does the pain start at one place and then travel to another
- Relieving factors if any e.g. eating, lying on one side
- History of abdominal injury

## When should the doctor be consulted for abdominal pain?

- Fever
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Constipation/inability to pass stools
- Inability to pass urine, frequent urination, burning sensation while passing urine
- Pain/tenderness on touching the abdomen
- Abdominal injury
- Persistent pain
- Severe pain
- Bleeding in the stools or vomit
- Discomfort in breathing

# Abdominal pain

## What are the types of abdominal pain?

Peptic Ulcer pain – Burning pain that occurs below the sternum.

Gallbladder pain – Continuous pain under the right ribs. Vomiting and fever associated.

Excess gas in the abdomen can lead to bloating and pain.

Kidney pain – pain off and on that moves from the side downwards.

Appendicitis pain – First starts around the navel and then moves to the right.

Pain due to PID (in women) – pain in the lower part of the abdomen.

Ovarian Pain – Deep pain within the pelvis.

Menstrual pain – Cramping pain that starts at the center.

## What is the treatment for abdominal pain?

The treatment for abdominal pain depends on the cause. The treatment can vary from no treatment for a viral diarrhea, to antibiotics to surgery for appendicitis etc.

### Types of Abdominal Pain

