



# Abdominal Pain



Office d'éducation des patients du CUSM  
MUHC Patient Education Office



This material is also available on the  
MUHC Health Education Collection (<http://infotheque.muhc.ca/>)  
MUHC Patient Education Office ([www.muhcpatienteducation.ca](http://www.muhcpatienteducation.ca)).

This material was developed by the McGill  
University Health Centre Emergency Department.

## What is wrong?

You have been evaluated in the Emergency Department for abdominal pain. Depending on your presentation, you may have undergone various tests.

The exact cause of your abdominal pain is unclear. We do not think that this represents an immediate life-threatening problem and think that the pain will start to improve shortly.

## What should I do at home?

- The emergency doctor might have given you medication for pain. Take it as directed.
- When the pain improves, start a light diet and increase the amount of food slowly as long as it does not bother you. Avoid alcohol, fatty or spicy foods.
- Drink your usual amounts of liquid.

## When am I going to feel better?

Your pain should improve in the next 2 days.

## Should I see another doctor?

- Contact your family doctor to let him or her know of the situation.
- In certain cases the emergency doctor may refer you to a specialist.

## When should I come back to the Emergency Department?

You should return right away if you:

- Have worsening abdominal pain or pain that becomes localized to one area
- Have a fever above 38°C / 100.4°F or chills
- Have repetitive vomiting
- Have vomiting with blood or vomit that looks like coffee-grounds
- Have black stools or blood in your stool
- Have been unable to keep down fluids
- Have been feeling faint
- Have a bloated or bigger stomach
- Cannot pass gas or your bowel movement stops
- Have any new or worsening symptom that concern you