



Appendicitis

You came to the emergency department with tummy pain. The doctor checked you for appendicitis. Today your examination and tests do not show that you need an operation, but appendicitis can take time to show itself.

What is it?

The appendix is a small tube attached to the bowel, low on the right side of the tummy. If it becomes blocked and infected, it is called appendicitis. The pain often starts around the belly button and moves to the lower right side. It usually gets worse over hours. Appendicitis needs treatment in hospital, usually an operation.

Looking after yourself at home

- Rest at home, and have an adult stay with you for the next 24 hours if possible.
- Drink clear fluids and eat light food only if you feel like it.
- Watch how your pain changes. Note if it moves to the lower right side or gets stronger.
- Do not take laxatives or use a hot water bottle on your tummy until a doctor has checked you again.
- Stay close to the emergency department and have a way to get back quickly.

Medicines

- Paracetamol can help the pain, unless your doctor told you not to. Follow the packet or your doctor's instructions.
- Avoid strong pain medicines unless a doctor prescribed them, as they may hide worsening pain.

Follow-up

- If you were asked to come back for a check or a scan, keep that appointment even if you feel better.
- See your family doctor or health centre within 24 hours if the pain has not gone away.

Come back to the emergency department or call an ambulance straight away if:

- Pain that gets worse, or moves to the lower right side of your tummy
- Pain that is worse when you walk, cough or go over bumps
- Fever, shivering or sweats
- Vomiting that will not stop, or you cannot keep fluids down
- Your tummy becomes hard, swollen or very tender to touch
- Feeling faint, dizzy or very unwell



Scan to read this sheet on your phone

This leaflet is general information to support the advice your doctor or nurse gave you today. It does not replace their advice. If you are worried, seek medical help.

EM Orbit · Emergency medicine, in one orbit · [appendicitis-en](#)