

# Abdominal Pain in Men

One of the most common reasons men visit emergency rooms is severe and sudden abdominal pain. This is known as acute pain.

It can be a challenge to deal with because there are so many possible causes.

*“There can be several causes of abdominal pain in men, something as simple as indigestion or a pulled muscle. But more serious conditions can include infections of the prostate or appendicitis or something even as severe as a heart attack.”*

To determine the cause, your health care provider will examine you and ask you questions about the pain.

These include:

What does the pain feel like? Sharp, dull, cramping, burning?

Where is it?

What triggers it?

How long has it lasted?

Is it getting better, worse, or staying the same?

Has it spread?

Do you have any other symptoms?

*“Several of the other questions we’ll ask of a man who comes in with abdominal pain are questions about medications they use; if they’ve had any recent travel; any family history of abdominal issues; if they’ve had any gastrointestinal or stomach issues themselves; if they smoke, drink or use illicit drugs.”*

Tests of the blood, urine or stool may be done, along with imaging tests that take pictures of the inside of your body.

In some cases, a test called an endoscopy may be ordered, in which a flexible tube with a camera on the end is inserted into the body to allow doctors to examine the stomach and other abdominal organs.

As for what you can do, get plenty of rest.

Drink lots of fluids to stay hydrated.

Eat smaller meals or snacks throughout the day instead of three big ones.

Choose foods that are not high in fiber and are easy to tolerate.

Some pain relievers can aggravate abdominal pain. Ask your provider which medicines are okay for you to take.

See your provider right away if you have severe pain or abdominal tenderness, fever, bloody stools, persistent nausea or vomiting, yellow skin or a swollen abdomen.

*“Most abdominal pain will get better on its own with time and self-care. But if your symptoms get worse or don’t improve after a few days, it’s a good idea to contact your health care provider.”*