

performed when the analgesics are at peak effect. Psychological care of the child and parents is similar to that used in other emergency situations. Parents and older children need to express their feelings and concerns regarding the events surrounding the illness and hospitalization. The nurse can provide education and psychosocial support to promote adequate coping and alleviate anxiety for both the child and the family (see [Nursing Care Plan](#)).

## Nursing Care Plan

### The Child with Appendicitis

#### Case Study

Lisa is a 10-year-old girl who has a 2-day history of generalized periumbilical pain and anorexia. Today she developed a fever and vomiting, so her parents took her to her pediatrician. On examination, Lisa was febrile with abdominal pain midway between the anterior superior iliac crest and umbilicus. The pain intensifies with any activity or deep breathing. Blood work was performed and a complete blood count (CBC) with differential shows a white blood cell (WBC) count of  $21,000/\text{mm}^3$ , 79% bands, 14% lymphocytes, 6% eosinophils, and a normal hemoglobin and platelet count. With Susie's history and physical findings, she was referred to a local emergency room.

#### Assessment

Based on Lisa's history, what are the most important signs and symptoms that you need to be aware of?

#### Appendicitis Defining Characteristics

History of abdominal pain for 2 days that started around the umbilicus and has now progressed to the lower right abdomen (McBurney's point)

Fever

Anorexia

Nausea and vomiting