

# ACUTE ABDOMINAL PAIN

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Pet Poison Helpline

Minneapolis, Minnesota

## SIGNS OF ACUTE ABDOMINAL PAIN

### INVESTIGATION

Obtain complete history:

- ▶ Signalment
- ▶ Presenting complaint
- ▶ Previous history, surgery, trauma
- ▶ Diet (eg, normal diet, recent ingestion, fatty meals, table food)
- ▶ Vaccine and medication status
- ▶ Toxin exposure
- ▶ Travel history
- ▶ Progression
- ▶ Systemic and metabolic signs (eg anorexia, coughing, sneezing, vomiting, diarrhea, regurgitation, polyuria, polydipsia, polyphagia, weakness)
- ▶ Foreign body
- ▶ Indoor or outdoor status (cats)

### INVESTIGATION

Perform physical examination:

- ▶ **Hydration:** skin turgor, tacky mucous membranes, sunken eyes
- ▶ **Oral:** string under tongue, ulcerations, erosions, halitosis, foreign body, ptialism
- ▶ **Cardiorespiratory:** lung sounds, heart rate, pulse quality, capillary refill time
- ▶ **Abdominal:** organomegaly, ascites, pregnancy, pain localization, fluid-filled loops, borborygmi, foreign body, masses
- ▶ **Integumentary:** petechiae, ecchymoses
- ▶ **Musculoskeletal/neurologic:** mentation, cranial nerves, ataxia, dysautonomia, decreased rectal tone, ambulatory
- ▶ **Rectal:** prostatomegaly, fecal evaluation, melena
- ▶ **Urogenital:** bladder evaluation, neuter status, vaginal discharge, pain on kidney palpation

Evaluate if signalment, history, presenting complaint, and examination findings help rule in or out differential diagnoses

### DIAGNOSIS

- ▶ **Digestive:** gastric or duodenal ulcer, gastritis, gastroenteritis, GD, GDV, GI obstruction, intussusception, ileus, pancreatitis, intestinal parasitism, protein-losing enteropathy, inflammatory disease, neoplasia, hepatic disease
- ▶ **Metabolic:** acute renal failure, hepatopathy, hyperadrenocorticism, hypoadrenocorticism, diabetes
- ▶ **Peritoneal cavity:** trauma, septic peritonitis, GI tract perforation, foreign body, splenic torsion, ruptured abdominal abscess, uroabdomen, penetrating trauma, bile peritonitis, hemoabdomen, liver lobe torsion
- ▶ **Urinary:** ureteral, urethral, or cystic calculi; acute nephritis; pyelonephritis; urethral obstruction; acute renal failure; uroabdomen
- ▶ **Reproductive:** pyometra, labor or dystocia, uterine or testicular torsion, prostatic disease
- ▶ **Musculoskeletal:** intervertebral disk disease, abdominal muscular trauma, referred orthopedic pain
- ▶ **Infectious disease:** infectious canine hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus, panleukopenia, FIP, *Giardia* spp infection, *Salmonella* spp infection, *Clostridium* spp infection, vector-borne diseases
- ▶ **Other:** toxicity, bezoar, caustic or corrosive ingestion, nausea secondary to ileus (opioid therapy, postoperative)

BG = blood glucose

FAST = focused assessment with sonogram for trauma

FIC = feline idiopathic cystitis

GD = gastric dilatation

GDV = gastric dilatation-volvulus

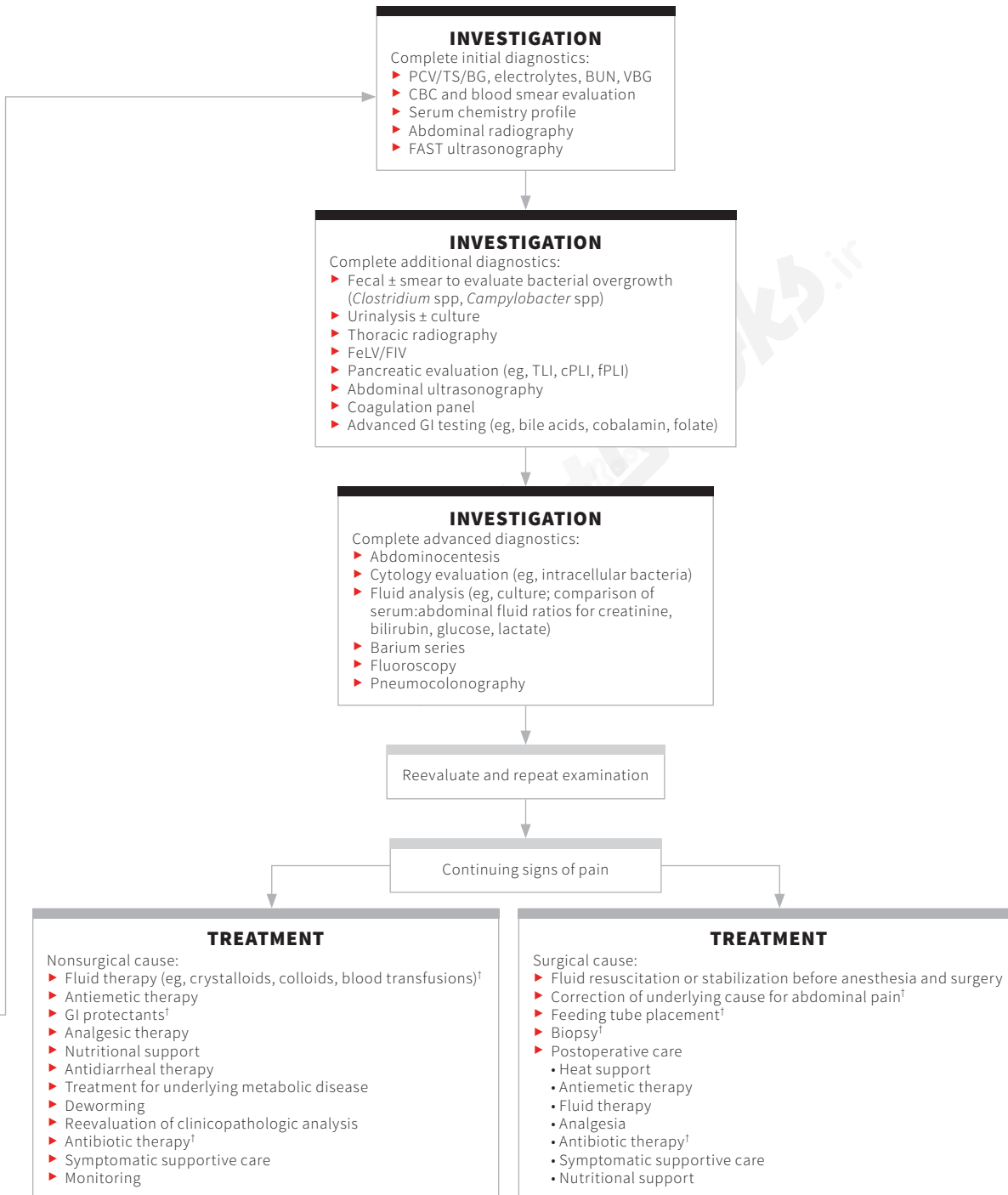
PCV = packed cell volume

PLI = pancreatic lipase immuno-reactivity

TLI = trypsin-like immunoreactivity

TS = total solids

VBG = venous blood gas



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†If appropriate