



Notes/Educational Pearls

Key Considerations

1. Assess for life-threatening causes of abdominal pain
2. Provide appropriate treatment for pain, vomiting, and shock
3. Consider transport to a specialty surgical center if aortic aneurysm or aortic dissection is suspected

Pertinent Assessment Findings

1. Rebound tenderness
2. Guarding
3. Abdominal distension
4. Abdominal tympany to percussion
5. Tenderness focal to a specific abdominal quadrant
6. Presence of “pulsatile” abdominal mass
7. Absence of or significant inequality of femoral or distal arterial pulses in lower extremities
8. Hyper or hypothermia
9. Rectal bleeding, hematemesis, vaginal bleeding
10. Jaundice

Quality Improvement

Associated NEMSIS Protocol(s) (eProtocol.01) (for additional information, go to www.nemsis.org)

- 9914109 – Medical - Abdominal Pain

Key Documentation Elements

- Assessment of abdomen to include findings on palpation/percussion including presence or absence of masses and presence and nature of tenderness/pain
- Treatment and response to treatment

Performance Measures

- Assessment for life-threatening etiology
- Mitigation of pain per the [Pain Management Guideline](#)

References

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3. LoVecchio F, Oster N, Sturmann K, Nelson LS, Flashner S, Finger R. The use of analgesics in patients with acute abdominal pain. *J Emerg Med* 1997; 15:775–9
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