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## DIAGNOSIS OF THE ACUTE ABDOMEN

- I. SERIOUS ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A DIAGNOSIS
- II. NEVER DELAY WITH SEVERE ABDOMINAL PAIN
- III. USE KNOWLEDGE OF ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY
  - A. Muscle Involvement
    1. Rigidity of Rectus
    2. Spasm of Flat Muscles
    3. Immobility of Diaphragm
    4. Irritation of Psoas and Obturator Muscles.
  - B. Location of Pain
    1. Testicular Pain
    2. Shoulder Pain
    3. Pelvic Nerve Irritation causes no Abdominal Rigidity.
  - C. Colic Versus Steady Pain
    1. Colic: Examples, Biliary, small and large intestinal obstruction, Ureteral Obstruction.
    2. Steady Pain: Examples, Pancreatitis, Appendicitis, Generalized Peritonitis.
- IV. HISTORY
  - A. Age
  - B. Exact Time of Onset and Severity
  - C. Pain
    1. Localization, Shift and Location
    2. Character
    3. Radiation
    4. Effect on Respiration
  - D. Vomiting
    1. Etology
      - a. Toxins, Infections, etc.
      - b. Obstruction of Hollow Viscus
      - c. Irritation of Peritoneum
    2. Frequency
    3. Character
  - E. Anorexia
  - F. Bowel Function
  - G. Menstruation
  - H. Past History

V. EXAMINATION

- A. Movement
- B. Pulse
- C. Respiration
- D. Blood Pressure
- E. Temperature
- F. State of Hydration
- G. Muscle Rigidity
- H. Auscultation

VI. WORKING CLASSIFICATION OF DISEASES WHICH CAUSE  
ABDOMINAL SURGICAL EMERGENCIES

- A. Primary Inflammation
  - 1. Appendicitis
  - 2. Diverticulitis
  - 3. Cholecystitis
  - 4. Pancreatitis
  - 5. Pyelonephritis
- B. Primary Perforation
  - 1. Gastroduodenal Ulcer
  - 2. Diverticulitis
  - 3. Small Bowel Ulceration
  - 4. Carcinoma
- C. Primary Obstruction
  - 1. Intestinal (Small and Large)
    - a. Adhesions
    - b. Hernia
    - c. Carcinoma
  - 2. Urinary Tracts
  - 3. Ureteral
- D. Primary Hemorrhage
  - 1. Ruptured Ectopic Pregnancy
- E. Trauma
  - 1. Perforating
  - 2. Non-Perforating
    - a. Hemorrhage
    - b. Fracture of Internal Organ or Perforation of Bowel