

Flank Pain: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

Flank pain is pain on the side of the back just below the rib cage and above the waist. It can be on one or both sides. Flank pain has many possible causes, including a kidney stone, a urinary tract infection, or back strain.

Flank pain may get better on its own. But don't ignore new symptoms, such as fever, nausea and vomiting, urination problems, pain that gets worse, and dizziness. These may be signs of a more serious problem. You may have to have tests or other treatment.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Rest until you feel better.
- Take pain medicines exactly as directed.
 - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
 - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter pain medicine, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve). Read and follow all instructions on the label.
- If your doctor prescribed antibiotics, take them as directed. Do not stop taking them just because you feel better. You need to take the full course of antibiotics.
- To apply heat, put a warm water bottle, a heating pad set on low, or a warm cloth on the painful area. Do not go to sleep with a heating pad on your skin.
- To prevent dehydration, drink plenty of fluids. Choose water and other clear liquids until you feel better. If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.

When should you call for help?



Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Your flank pain gets worse.
- You have new symptoms, such as fever, nausea, or vomiting.
- You have symptoms of a urinary problem. For example:
 - You have blood or pus in your urine.
 - You have chills or body aches.
 - It hurts to urinate.
 - You have groin or belly pain.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you do not

get better as expected.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/PatientEd>

Enter **S191** in the search box to learn more about "**Flank Pain: Care Instructions**".

©2006-2022 Healthwise, Incorporated.

This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.