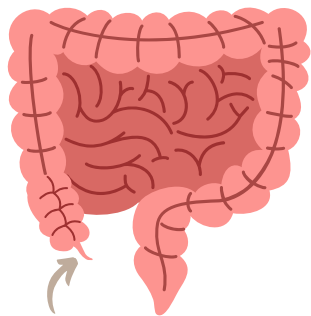


# APPENDICITIS FOR PARENTS & CARERS

This guide is intended for the parents and carers of patients who are suffering or suspected to be suffering from appendicitis.

This guide will introduce you to the healthcare team who are here to help you and your child.

It will also introduce places in the hospital you may visit for your care.



Appendix

## WHAT IS APPENDICITIS?

### WHAT IS APPENDICITIS?

Appendicitis is the inflammation of the appendix, a small pouch attached to the large intestine.

This can be caused by an infection or a blockage in the intestine.

Around 1 in 13 people will get appendicitis in their lifetime

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS IN CHILDREN?

Tummy pain usually around the belly button or on the right side which becomes worse as time goes on

Feeling or being sick

Having a high temperature

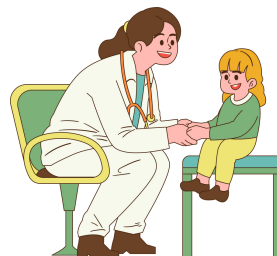
Feeling generally unwell

### HOW IS IT TREATED?

There are 2 main options to treat appendicitis: surgery or watch and wait.

Surgery: known as an appendectomy, is the removal of the appendix.

Watch and wait: Your child will be given antibiotics and be monitored to see if the inflammation goes down.



## APPENDICITIS: WHERE DO YOU GO?

### A&E

A&E is where you will likely go for your child to be admitted into hospital. In A&E you will meet doctors and nurses who try to determine if your child has appendicitis. They will do a series of tests and exams to see if your child needs an operation to remove their appendix.

1

### WARD

If it has been confirmed that your child has appendicitis they will be admitted to a ward. Here, the team of doctors and nurses will try to make your child more comfortable. This could be by giving medicine to help with pain or to treat any infection. If your child needs an operation they will return to the ward after.

2

### OPERATING THEATRE

If it has been decided that your child needs an operation then it will take place in the operating theatre. Here, your surgeon will lead a team of healthcare professionals in performing an appendectomy.

3

### OUTPATIENTS

Once your child has been discharged from the hospital the surgeon who operated may want to see them in the clinic again for a check-up. You should be told if they want to see your child again before discharge.

4

# APPENDICITIS: WHO'S HERE TO HELP?

## TRIAGE NURSE

When you arrive at A&E you will meet a triage nurse. They will assess your child to see what type of care they will need. This ensures the process will run as smoothly as possible.

## A&E DOCTOR

A&E Doctors (also known as emergency doctors) are responsible for running the A&E department. As well as examining your child they will order any tests or scans they need. If they suspect your child has appendicitis they will alert the surgeons to come and see your child.

## RADIOLOGISTS

If A&E requests any types of scans, such as X-rays or MRIs, these will be looked over by a radiologist. Radiologists are special doctors who are able to look at different medical images to see what is wrong with someone.

## GENERAL SURGEONS

If it is determined that your child needs an operation, this will be carried out by a general surgeon. General surgeons cover a wide range of operations in emergency and non-emergency settings. They will be called in to come and see your child where they will examine them and determine if they need to be admitted or need an operation.

# APPENDICITIS: WHO'S HERE TO HELP?

## ANAESTHETIST

If your child needs an operation, they will need to be put to sleep for it. This will be the job of the anaesthetist. They will be responsible for putting your child to sleep for the operation and looking after them throughout the procedure.

## WARD NURSES

If your child is admitted to a ward, they will come under the care of the ward nurses. These nurses are responsible for your child's care on the ward.

## JUNIOR DOCTORS

Junior doctors are qualified doctors who will assist your child's care during their hospital stay. They will support the other doctors in your care. You could meet them in A&E, anaesthetics, the ward or in surgery.

## HEALTHCARE STUDENTS

Healthcare students could be nurses or doctors in training. While they are still learning, they could be involved in your child's care.

# REMEMBER: DON'T PANIC!

Finally, don't panic! Everyone is here to help make this time as comfortable as possible for you and your child. If you are unsure then someone will be happy to help!

## NHS WEBSITE



## REFERENCES

HNHS (2019). Appendicitis. [online] NHS. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Appendicitis/> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2024].

NHS Cambridge University Hospitals (2022). Appendicitis in children – information for parents and carers. [online] NHS Cambridge University Hospitals. Available at: <https://www.cuh.nhs.uk/patient-information/appendicitis-in-children-information-for-parents-and-carers/#:~:text=What%20are%20the%20symptoms%20of> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2024].

Baird, D.L.H., Simillis, C., Kontovounisios, C., Rasheed, S. and Tekkis, P.P. (2017). Acute appendicitis. BMJ. [online] 357(j1703). Available at: <https://www.bmj.com/content/357/bmj.j1703> [Accessed 2 Jan 2024].