

Abdominal Pain (Part 2)

3/18/18

The quadrant system is how we learned abdominal pain, but the differential diagnosis generated by the quadrant system DOES NOT adequately address all of the life threats. In each patient with abdominal pain, we want to address the sphincter tightening emergencies, in addition to the dangerous diagnoses included in the quadrant system, like appendicitis.

So make sure to consider these 3 groups of life threatening diagnoses that aren't contained in the Quadrant System. Remember, only n00bs think in quadrants. Open your mind up!

3 Extra-abdominal life threats

1. Myocardial infarction (MI)
2. Ruptured ectopic pregnancy
3. Torsion or Abscess (testicular or ovarian)

3 Generalized intestinal life threats

1. Perforated viscus
2. Ischemic bowel (secondary to obstruction, ex. Incarcerated hernia)
3. Volvulus

3 Vascular life threats

1. Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA)
2. Aortic dissection
3. Mesenteric ischemia