

GALLSTONES

SIGNS AND WHEN TO SEEK CARE

GALLBLADDER

The gallbladder is a small organ under the liver that stores **bile**, a fluid that helps digest fat.

WHAT ARE GALLSTONES?

Gallstones are hard pieces of material (e.g., cholesterol or bilirubin) that form in the gallbladder. Gallstones can be:

- Pain in the **upper right belly**
- Pain in the **upper middle belly**
- Pain that spreads to the **back or right shoulder**
- Nausea or vomiting
- Pain **after eating**, especially after fatty meals
- Pain that comes in **attacks** and may last minutes to hours
- **Tiny** like grains of sand
- **Larger** like pebbles
- **Silent**, meaning they cause no symptoms
- Painful if they block bile from flowing out of the gallbladder

COMMON SIGNS

GO TO THE ER OR SEEK CARE IF...

You have severe belly pain that does not go away, pain so bad that you cannot sit still or get comfortable, fever or chills, yellowing of the skin or eyes, dark urine or pale stools, repeated vomiting, confusion, fainting, or feeling very weak



HOW ARE GALLSTONES CHECKED?

1. Talk about your symptoms with your provider
2. Physical exam
3. Blood tests
4. Imaging tests



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Sources: NIDDK, Mayo Clinic, MedlinePlus, Cleveland Clinic