

# H&E — CHOLELITHIASIS (Gallstones)

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## HISTORY

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### 1) Chief Complaint

"Pain in right upper abdomen × duration"

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### 2) History of Present Illness

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#### ◆ Onset

- Sudden onset pain → biliary colic
  - Gradual with fever → cholecystitis
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- ◆ Site

Right hypochondrium (RUQ)

May start in epigastrium.

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- ◆ Character of Pain

- Colicky
  - Severe
  - Comes in waves
  - Lasts 30 min to few hours
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- ◆ Radiation

- To right shoulder
  - To right scapular region (Boas sign)
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- ◆ Relation to Food

- Occurs after fatty meals

- Night attacks common
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- ◆ Duration of Each Episode

- Usually 1-5 hours
- Resolves spontaneously

If >6 hours → suspect acute cholecystitis

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- ◆ Associated Symptoms

- Nausea
  - Vomiting
  - Dyspepsia
  - Bloating
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- ◆ Fever

Absent in simple cholelithiasis

Present in cholecystitis

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◆ Jaundice

Suggests:

- CBD stone
- Mirizzi syndrome

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◆ Risk Factors (Very Important)

Classical 5 F's:

- Female
- Forty
- Fat
- Fertile
- Fair

Also:

- Diabetes
- OCP use

- Rapid weight loss
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## Differential Diagnoses After History

- Cholelithiasis (biliary colic)
  - Acute cholecystitis
  - Peptic ulcer
  - Acute pancreatitis
  - Renal colic
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## EXAMINATION

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### GENERAL EXAMINATION

Look for:

- Icterus
- Fever

- Tachycardia
  - Obesity
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## 2 ABDOMINAL EXAMINATION

Expose from nipples to mid-thigh.

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### INSPECTION

- Abdominal contour
- Surgical scars
- Distension

Usually normal in uncomplicated stones.

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### PALPATION

Start away from pain.

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◆ A) Superficial Palpation

- Localized RUQ tenderness
  - No guarding in simple biliary colic
  - Guarding if cholecystitis
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◆ B) Deep Palpation

Check for:

- Deep RUQ tenderness
  - Palpable gallbladder (rare in simple stones)
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◆ Murphy's Sign (Very Important)

Procedure:

- Place fingers in RUQ
- Ask patient to take deep breath

Positive:

- Sudden arrest of inspiration due to pain

Suggests acute cholecystitis

Usually negative in simple cholelithiasis.

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- ◆ Palpable Gallbladder

If palpable + jaundice → think malignancy head of pancreas

(Courvoisier's law)

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## PERCUSSION

Usually normal.

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## AUSCULTATION

Normal bowel sounds.

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## INVESTIGATIONS

### Ultrasound Abdomen (Gold Standard)

Findings:

- Echogenic focus
  - Acoustic shadow
  - Mobile stone
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### LFT

Usually normal in simple stones.

Raised bilirubin → CBD stone

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### Serum Amylase

To rule out pancreatitis.

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## COMPLICATIONS

- Acute cholecystitis
  - Empyema gallbladder
  - Mucocele
  - Choledocholithiasis
  - Obstructive jaundice
  - Gallstone pancreatitis
  - Gallstone ileus
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## DIFFERENCE: Cholelithiasis vs Cholecystitis

Feature	Cholelithiasis	Cholecystitis
Pain	Colicky	Continuous
Fever	No	Yes
Murphy's sign	Negative	Positive

Guarding	No	Yes
WBC	Normal	Raised

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## COMMON VIVA QUESTIONS

- Types of gallstones?
  - Why fatty food causes pain?
  - What is Courvoisier's law?
  - What is Boas sign?
  - What is Mirizzi syndrome?
  - Why stones cause pancreatitis?
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-> The End <-