

Gallstones

GP Assessment

1. **History** - RUQ abdominal pain, often radiating to back. Post-prandial attacks of pain lasting a few hours.
2. **Examination** - RUQ pain on palpation, (Murphy's sign), evidence of sepsis, jaundice.
3. **Investigations** - FBC, CRP, UEs, LFTs, Lipase, USS abdomen should be arranged

Arrange for direct access ultrasound scan of the abdomen

ASYMPTOMATIC PATIENT
(gallstones found on incidentally on USS or other imaging)

- Reassure patient
- No further action is required

Evidence of Gallstones on USS

No evidence of bile duct stones on USS, LFTs or clinically

- Still symptomatic with abdominal pain

Evidence of bile duct stones present on USS, LFTs or clinically e.g;

- dilated bile ducts
- overt duct stone
- altered LFTs
- jaundice

Suspicion of upper GI malignancy on USS or any **red flags**

URGENT SUSPECTED CANCER REFERRAL (link to 2WW upper GI form)

High Risk

History and examination suggestive of an acutely unwell patient, signs of sepsis or bloods results suggesting;

- Cholangitis
- Pancreatitis
- Acute cholecystitis

Arrange for **immediate** hospital transfer

Management in the community (adequate for up to 30% of patients)

- Analgesia
- Low fat diet
- No role for medical treatment, including hyoscine or proton pump inhibitors
- Antibiotics should be reserved for patients with signs of sepsis
- No role for shockwave treatment
- Review in 1-3 months

Resolution of symptoms or satisfactory improvement

Symptoms not improved satisfactorily

Referral to general surgery. Refer urgently if jaundiced.

- St George's Hospital (e-RS)
- St Helier Hospital (e-RS)
- LFTs should be monitored in community until definitive treatment
- Patient will require lap cholecystectomy and bile duct clearance as per hospital protocols
- Ensure results of imaging and bloods included in referral

Patient information leaflets:

- [PatientUK - Gallstones](#)
- [PatientUK- Gallstones diet sheet](#)
- [PatientUK - Cholecystitis](#)

References:

1. [NICE Clinical Guidelines. Gallstones Diagnosis and Management](#)
2. [Royal College of Surgeons. Gallstones Disease](#)
3. [Association of upper GI surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland. Acute gallstone disease management pathway.](#)

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