

ANSWERS & RATIONALE:

*Correct responses are marked in red.

Question 1:

**Which of the following are clinical signs that would typically contribute to a diagnosis of acute appendicitis?
(select all that apply)**

x Rebound Tenderness

-Rebound tenderness is a classic sign of appendicitis as the inflamed appendix irritates the peritoneum, producing the painful response to the rapid removal of pressure on the abdomen (Jarvis, 2014).

 Positive Murphy's Sign

-Murphy's sign is associated with inflammation of the gallbladder, or cholecystitis in the Right Upper Quadrant. While rare cases of appendicitis may produce a positive Murphy's sign it is not a typical clinical finding (Jarvis, 2014).

 Costovertebral Angle Tenderness

-This tests for inflammation of the kidneys and paranephric area, not the appendix or lower abdomen. (Jarvis, 2014).

x Positive Psoas Sign (Iliopsoas Test)

-An inflamed or perforated appendix irritates the iliopsoas muscle, resulting in a positive psoas sign (Jarvis, 2014).

x Right Lower Quadrant Pain

-The appendix is situated in the Right Lower Quadrant and when it is inflamed the appendix begins to irritate the adjoining abdominal wall and producing localized pain. Present in 96% of cases (Craig, 2015).

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Question 2:

Which of the following is not a risk factor for developing appendicitis?

a. Age

-In ages 10-19 years the risk of developing appendicitis is greater than other age groups (Craig, 2015).

b. Gender

-Men are at 1.4x greater risk of developing appendicitis than women (Craig, 2015).

c. High Fibre diet

-It is a low fibre diet that increases the viscosity of the feces, leading to increased risk of appendiceal lumen obstruction (Craig, 2015).

d. Family History

-There is an increased risk for developing appendicitis with family history of appendicitis (Craig, 2015).

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Question 3:

A patient with appendicitis who has been booked for an appendectomy asks you, “What does my appendix even do?” Which of the following responses reflects the MOST appropriate answer to this question?

- a. “It secretes digestive enzymes that help your body to digest fibre.”
-The appendix does not secrete enzymes and does not play a role in the digestion process (Bollinger, Barbas, Bush, Lin & Parker, 2007).
- b. “It releases chemical transmitters that stimulate peristalsis.”
-The appendix does not secrete chemical transmitters, nor does it have a role in peristalsis (Bollinger, Barbas, Bush, Lin & Parker, 2007).
- c. “Its exact function is currently unknown, but it may have a role in restoring normal gut flora after infection”.**
-True: there are several hypotheses for the role of the appendix. One is that it is a vestigial organ; another is that it stores good bacteria to restore normal gut flora post-infection (Bollinger, Barbas, Bush, Lin & Parker, 2007)
- d. “It plays a critical role in immune system function.”
-While there is a structural connection from the appendix to lymphatic tissue, there is no indication that it is critical to the function of the immune system (Bollinger, Barbas, Bush, Lin & Parker, 2007). Option “c” is a more appropriate response.

Bonus Question:

Women are less likely to develop appendicitis than men:

- a. True** *Men are 1.4x more likely to develop appendicitis than women, therefore women are at lower risk for developing appendicitis (Craig, 2015).*
- b. False