Appendicitis

What is appendicitis?
Inside the tummy is a part of the body called the appendix. The appendix does not have a job. The body doesn’t need it. When germs make the appendix sick, it is called appendicitis. It makes the appendix get red, puffy, and sore. You may have appendicitis.

Even though germs cause appendicitis, you can’t catch it like a cold. You can’t get it from something you eat. You didn’t cause your appendix to get sick. The doctors don’t know why some kids get appendicitis.

What are the signs that you may have appendicitis?
• Hurting around or on the lower right side of your belly button
• Hurting when you cough, sneeze, or move
• Feeling sick to your stomach
• Throwing up
• Having a fever

Getting help when you hurt
If you hurt, tell a grown-up, and they can try to help you feel better. You can use these faces to show grown-ups how much you hurt. Pick the face that shows how little or how much your tummy hurts, even if your face doesn’t look the same way.
How will the doctors help your body?
The doctors will check your body and ask you how you feel. The doctors may need to take some pictures to see your appendix. Sometimes, the doctors may need to check your blood.
When you have appendicitis, the germs from your appendix may make other parts of your body sick. Since you don’t need your appendix, doctors may remove it to help your body. A grown-up will explain how the doctors will do this. You may also get medicine to help you. Some medicine can help your body hurt less. Other medicine can help your body fight germs.

How can you help your body?
After the doctors remove your appendix, your body can start to feel better. Getting out of bed and walking helps your body heal. Your doctors and nurses will tell you how often you should walk. They will also tell you when eating and drinking will help your body. If you hurt, the doctors can give you medicine to help you hurt less. You can also do things to help your body feel better if it hurts, such as:

• Listen to music.
• Watch cartoons.
• Play games and puzzles.
• Color or do another art activity.
• Blow bubbles or a pinwheel.

You can learn more about appendicitis. Your family, doctors, and nurses can listen and talk with you.