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# Gallbladder and Gallbladder Diseases

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_ Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

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**I. The client/caregiver can define function of gallbladder and biliary system.**

- A. It is a muscular sac located under the liver.
- B. It stores and concentrates the bile produced in the liver.
- C. It has excess bile that is not immediately needed for digestion.
- D. The bile is released into the small intestine in response to food.
- E. The cystic duct drains the gallbladder. The common bile duct drains into the duodenum. These two ducts form the biliary system.

**II. The client/caregiver can define diseases of the gallbladder.**

- A. Gallstones are formed in the gallbladder.
- B. They are made up of water, salts, lecithin, cholesterol, and other substances.
- C. They can be of various sizes, ranging from sand size particles to larger than 8 mm.
- D. Biliary colic is when a stone is blocking the opening from the gallbladder.
- E. If the stone blocks the cystic duct for a period of time, acute cholecystitis will occur.
- F. If the blockage persists, bacteria can grow, resulting in cholangitis.
- G. Stones that block the lower end of common bile duct may obstruct secretion from the pancreas and produce pancreatitis.

**III. The client/caregiver can describe signs and symptoms of gallbladder disease.**

- A. Abdominal pain that
  - Is in the right upper abdomen or the middle of the upper abdomen
  - May be recurrent
  - May be sharp, cramping, or dull

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- May radiate to the back or below the right shoulder blade
- May be made worse by eating fatty or greasy foods
- Can occur within minutes of a meal
- B. Jaundice
- C. Fever
- D. Clay-colored stools
- E. Nausea and vomiting
- F. Heartburn
- G. Excess gas
- H. Abdominal fullness

**IV. The client/caregiver can list teaching needs for clients with gallbladder disease.**

- A. Nutrition instructions should include the following:
  1. Understand and follow diet as prescribed. High-fiber and low-fat diets are often recommended (check therapeutic diet chapter).
  2. Eat small, more frequent meals to prevent attacks.
  3. Replacement of water-soluble vitamins (vitamin A, D, E, and K) can sometimes be ordered by physician.
- B. When to contact physician
  - Severe pain
  - Jaundice
  - Fever
  - Changes in color of stool or urine
- C. Take medication as prescribed. Types of medication might include the following:
  1. Pain medication
  2. Medication to relax smooth muscles and spasm of gallbladder
  3. Medication to reduce nausea and vomiting
- D. A follow-up appointment with physician and/or surgeon is given at time of discharge.

(Continued)

**RESOURCE**

Dietician

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