

processes beside appendicitis or the presence of complications such as perforation, phlegmon, or abscess formation if the temperature is $>38.3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($\sim 101^{\circ}\text{F}$) and if there are rigors.

Patients with appendicitis will be found to lie quite still to avoid peritoneal irritation caused by movement, and some will report discomfort caused by a bumpy car ride on the way to the hospital or clinic, coughing, sneezing, or other actions that replicate a Valsalva maneuver. The entire abdomen should be examined systematically starting in an area where the patient does not report discomfort if possible. Classically, maximal tenderness is identified where the appendix is most often located—in the right lower quadrant at or near McBurney's point, which is approximately one-third of the way along a line originating at the anterior iliac spine and running to the umbilicus. Gentle pressure in the left lower quadrant may elicit pain in the right lower quadrant if the appendix is located there. This is Rovsing's sign ([Table 331-4](#)). Evidence of parietal peritoneal irritation is often best elicited by gentle abdominal percussion, jiggling the patient's gurney or bed, or mildly bumping the feet.

TABLE 331-4 Classic Signs of Appendicitis in Patients with Abdominal Pain

MANEUVER	FINDINGS
Rovsing's sign	Palpating in the left lower quadrant causes pain in the right lower quadrant
Obturator sign	Internal rotation of the hip causes pain, suggesting the possibility of an inflamed appendix located in the pelvis
Iliopsoas sign	Extending the right hip causes pain along posterolateral back and hip, suggesting retrocecal appendicitis

Atypical presentation and pain patterns are common, especially in the very old or the very young. Diagnosing appendicitis in children can be especially challenging because they tend to respond so dramatically to stimulation and obtaining an accurate history may be difficult. In addition, it is important to remember that the smaller omentum found in children may be less likely to wall off an