

DD

Bowel!

Diarrhoea

Definition:

Defined as the abnormal passage of liquid and frequent stools.

Diarrhoea is referred to as chronic if it persists for longer than 2 weeks.

Differential Diagnosis

| Common | Occassional | Rare |
|--|--|--|
| Gastroenteritis (food poisoning, campylobacter) | lactose intolerance (1 in 4 babies) | appendisitis |
| Antibiotics | Chronic infection | Laxative misuse |
| IBS | Bowel neoplasm | Thyrotoxicosis |
| Diverticulitis | IBD (UC/Crohn's disease) | Malabsorbtion (coeliac disease) |
| Overflow constipation (elderly) | Excessive Alcohol | Allergy |
| | Toddler diarrhoea | |

Red Flags

Weight loss in chronic diarrhoea is suggestive of pathology

Beware of dehydration in chronic diarrhoea (Diaralyte sachets)

Constipation

Definition:

Constipation is defined as the infrequent or difficult evacuation of Faeces.

Acceptable norm within the working population varies from 3 times a day to 3 times a week.

The causes of constipation are multifactorial but serious caused are rare.

Differential Diagnosis

| Common | Occasional | Rare |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Diet and lifestyle - not enough fibre | Dehydration | Space occupying lesions (extracolonic) |
| Inactivity - especially elderly | Acquired megacolon (laxitive abuse) | Acute bowel obstructions |
| IBS | Diverticulosis | Hypercalcaemia |
| Painful perianal conditions | Hypothyroidism | Crohn's disease with strictures |
| Nearly all drugs | Ca rectum/colon | Behavioural (stool holding) |

Red Flags

- Constipation in the elderly is rarely sinister unless accompanied by other systemic signs (wt loss, rectal bleeding etc)
- Don't attribute abdominal pain to constipation
- Don't assume that known pathology in an individual is causing their constipation
- Beware of changes within the normal pattern
- Consider Hirschsprung's disease in the young (swollen abdomen, empty rectum)

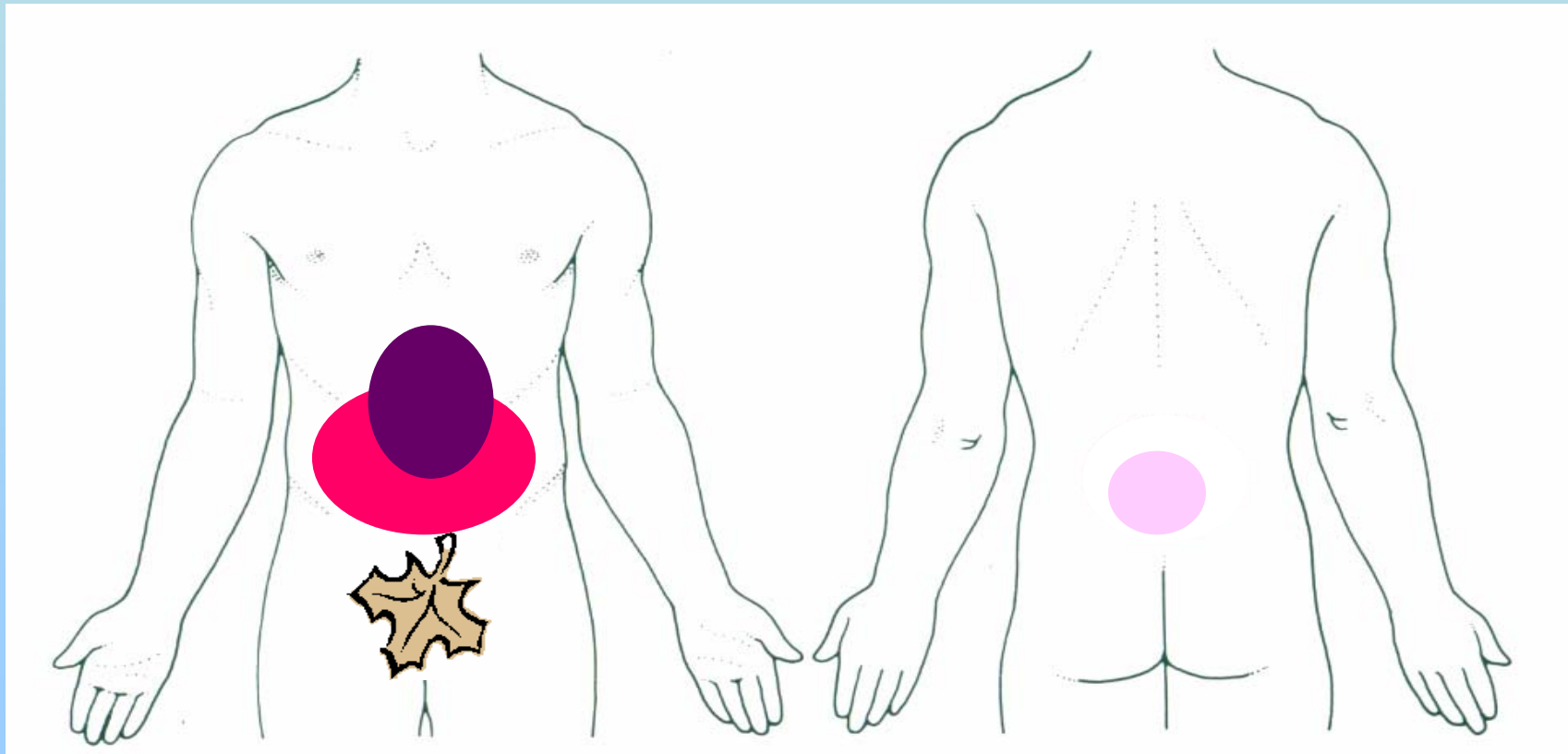
Case History Considerations

- How long have you had diarrhoea/constipation?
- What was your normal pattern?
- How many bowel motions are you having daily?
- Is there any blood or mucus in your stools?
- Do you have urgency?
- Are you making the toilet?
- Does your pain ease on emptying your bowels?
- Have you consulted your GP?
- Are you taking laxatives?
- Are you aware of any food allergies?
- Previous episodes?
- Associated symptoms?

UC & Chron's Disease

- Diarrhoea
- Constipation
- Fever
- Abdominal Pain
- Rectal bleeding
- Night Sweats
- Decreased appetite/wt. loss, nausea
- Skin lesions
- Uveitis
- Arthritis
- Migratory arthralgia

UC & Chron's Disease



Acute Pancreatitis

- Epigastric pain radiating to back
- Fever & sweating
- Nausea & vomiting
- Tachycardia
- Malaise
- Weakness
- Jaundice

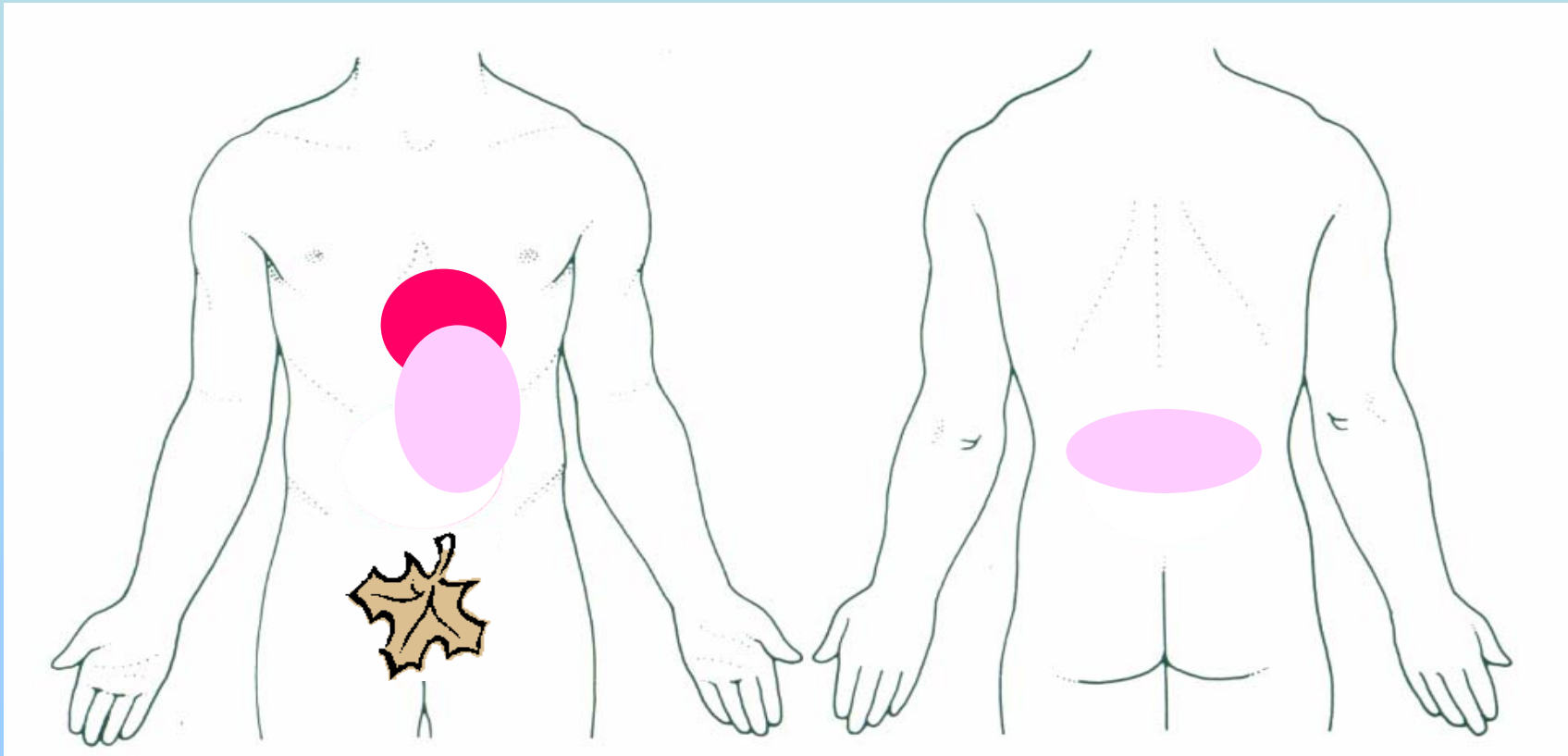
Chronic Pancreatitis

- Epigastric pain radiating to the back
- Upper LT lumbar region pain
- Nausea & vomiting
- Constipation
- Flatulence
- Weight loss

Pancreatic Carcinoma

- Epigastric/upper abdominal pain radiating to the back
- Back pain may be the only symptom
- Jaundice
- Wt. loss
- Pale faeces
- Constipation
- Vomiting
- Weakness

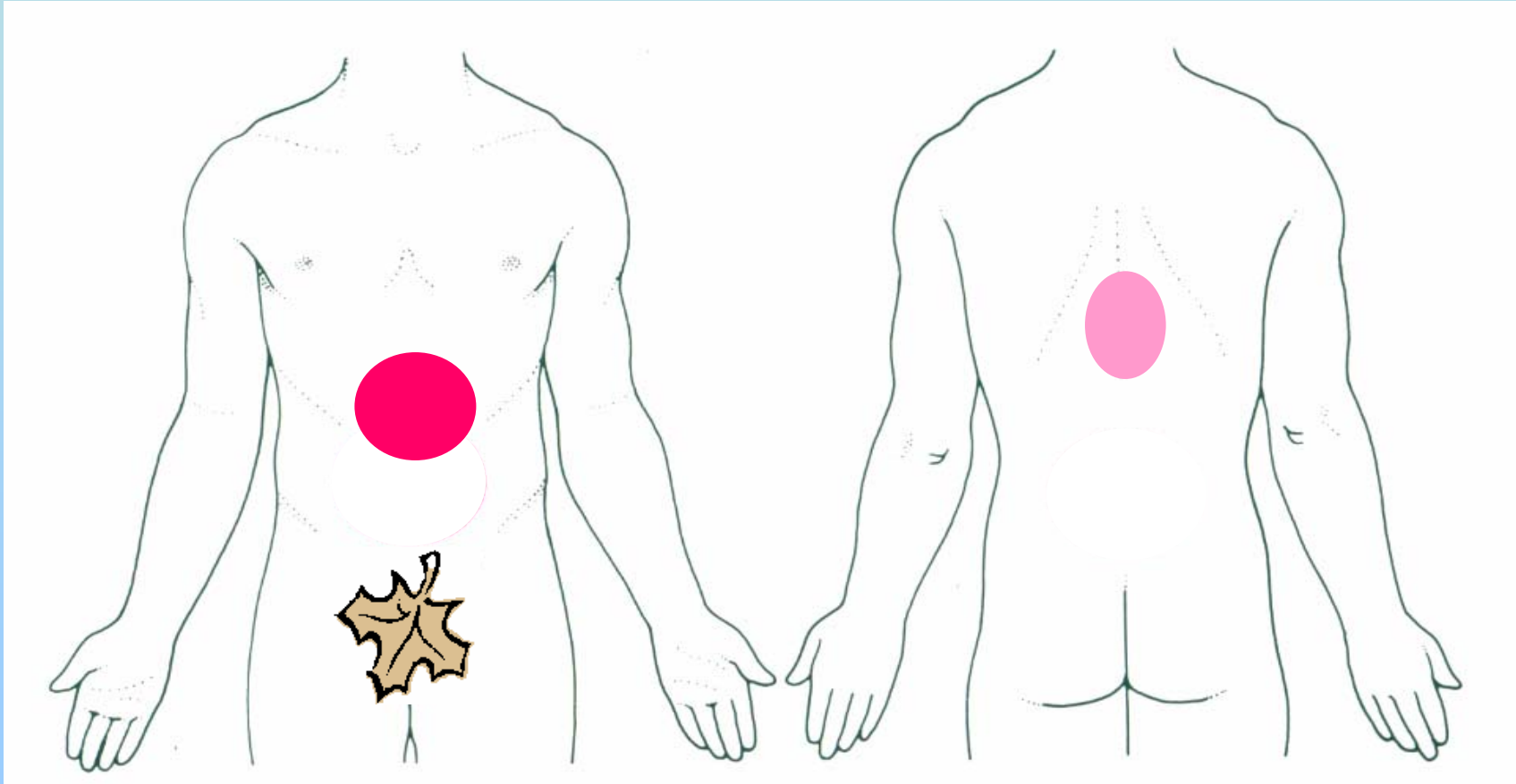
Acute Pancreatitis



Peptic Ulcer

- Epigastric pain 45/60 min after meals
- BF: food, vomiting, milk and antacids PM pain 12-3am
- BF: above
- Radiating back pain
- Right shoulder pain (rare)
- Nausea
- Anorexia
- Wt loss
- Bloody stools
- Black tarry stools

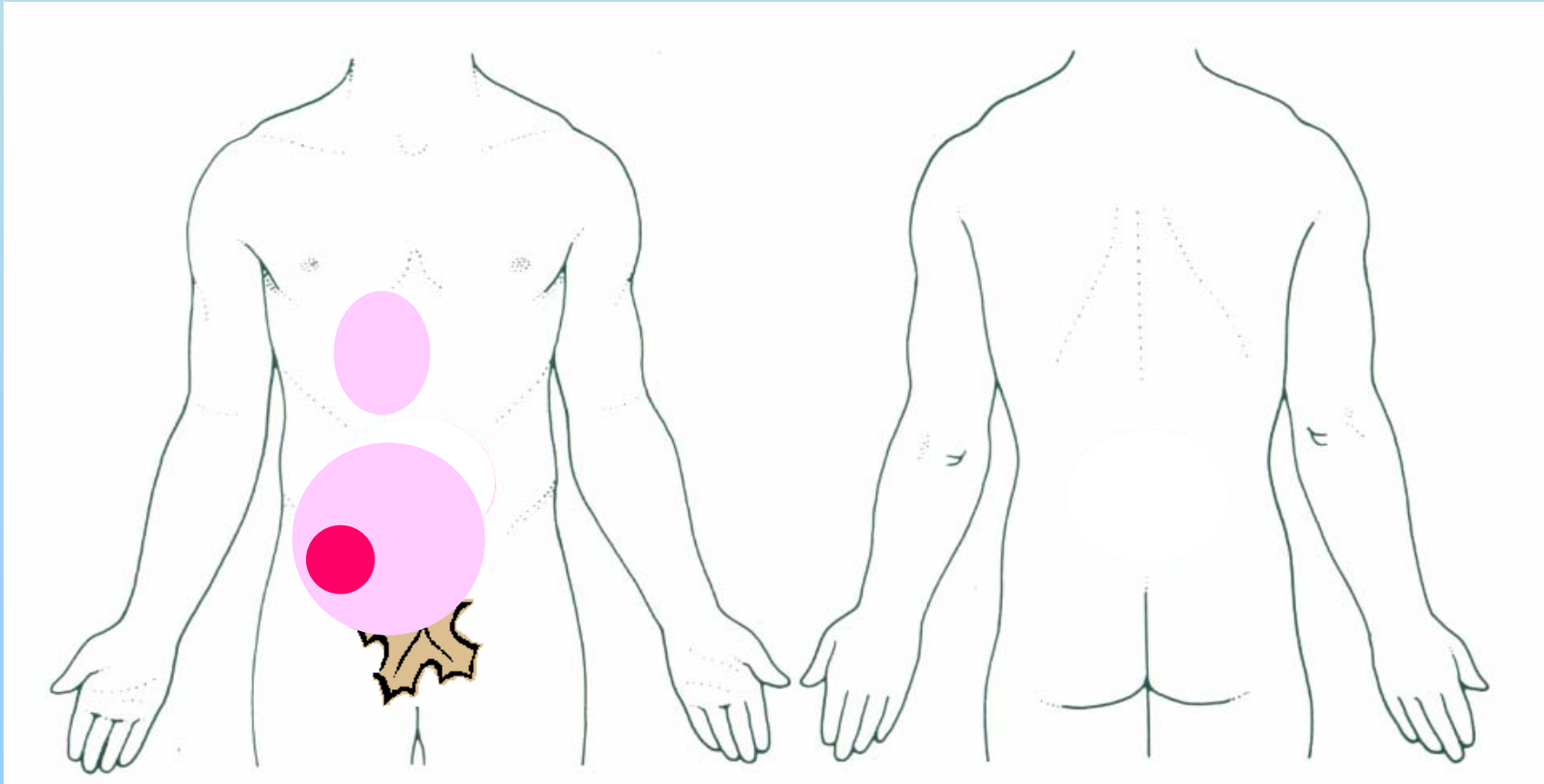
Peptic Ulcer



Appendicitis

- Periumbilical and/or epigastric pain
- RT lower quadrant pain
- RT thigh or testicular pain
- Positive McBurney's point
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dysuria (painful peeing)
- Fever
- Coated tongue and bad breath

Appenticitis



IBS

- Painful abdominal Cramps
- Constipation
- Diarrhoea
- Nausea and vomiting
- Anorexia
- Flatulence
- Foul breath

IBS

