



The Medical **Bulletin**

In Clinical Pearl

Carnett maneuver is a sign may be elicited in cases of abdominal pain to differentiate between local abdominal wall pain and pain of intra-abdominal causes.

The patient is asked to lift the head and shoulders from the examination table to tense the upper abdominal muscles. Alternatively, the patient is asked to raise both legs with straight knees for lower abdominal muscles.

When the abdominal pain decreases when the patient is asked to lift the head it suggests negative Carnett's sign which indicates in an intra-abdominal cause of the pain. In case of positive sign, patient's pain worsens on tensing of the abdominal wall muscles. A positive test increases the likelihood that the abdominal wall is the cause of abdominal pain.

Positive Carnett test is found in cases of hernias, nerve entrapment syndrome, irritation of intercostal nerve roots, anterior cutaneous nerve entrapment, trigger points, rectus sheath hematomas, psychogenic pain, etc..

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