UNIT TERMINAL OBJECTIVE
5-7 At the completion of this unit, the EMT-Critical Care Technician student will be able to utilize the assessment findings to formulate a field impression and implement the treatment plan for the patient with non-traumatic abdominal pain.

COGNITIVE OBJECTIVE
At the conclusion of this unit, the EMT-Critical Care Technician student will be able to:

5-7.1 Discuss the pathophysiology of non-traumatic abdominal emergencies. (C-1)
5-7.2 Discuss the signs and symptoms of non-traumatic acute abdominal pain. (C-1)
5-7.3 Describe the technique for performing a comprehensive physical examination on a patient with non-traumatic abdominal pain. (C-1)
5-7.4 Describe the management of the patient with non-traumatic abdominal pain. (C-1)

AFFECTIVE OBJECTIVES
None identified for this unit.

PSYCHOMOTOR OBJECTIVES
None identified for this unit.
I. Introduction
   A. Define acute abdomen
   B. Review anatomy and physiology

II. General pathophysiology, assessment, and management
   A. Pathophysiology of abdominal pain
      1. Bacterial contamination
      2. Chemical irritation
      3. Peritoneal inflammation
      4. Bleeding
      5. Obstruction
      6. Review causes of abdominal pain
         a. Appendicitis
         b. Pancreatitis
         c. Gallbladder
         d. Ulcer
         e. Obstruction
         f. Cholecystitis
         g. Acute and chronic renal failure
         h. Urinary stones
         i. Urinary tract infection

   B. Assessment findings
      1. Initial assessment
         a. Airway
         b. Breathing
         c. Circulation
         d. Disability
         e. Chief complaint
      2. History
         a. Onset
         b. Provoking factors
         c. Quality
         d. Region/ radiation
         e. Severity
         f. Time
         g. Previous history of same event
         h. Nausea/ vomiting
            (1) Excessive
            (2) Blood
         i. Change in bowel habits/ stool
            (1) Constipation
            (2) Diarrhea
            (3) Dark tarry stool
         j. Urination
            (1) Pain
            (2) Frequency
            (3) Discoloration
            (4) Odor
         k. Weight loss
l. Last meal
m. Chest pain/gas pain

3. Focused physical examination
   a. Apparent state of health
   b. Skin
   c. Vital signs
      (1) Tachycardia
      (2) Hypotension
d. Fever
e. Inspect abdomen
   (1) Distension
   (2) Scars
   (3) Discoloration
f. Palpate abdomen
   (1) Rigidity
   (2) Guarding
   (3) Location of pain
   (4) Pulsating mass
g. Check distal pulses bilaterally
   (1) Present
   (2) Equal

C. Management/treatment plan
1. Airway and ventilatory support
   a. Maintain an open airway
   b. High flow oxygen
2. Circulatory support
   a. Electrocardiogram
   b. Monitor blood pressure
c. Consider MAST (Consult Regional Protocol on MAST)
3. Venous access
   a. Consider fluid resuscitation
   b. Avoid interventions which can mask signs and symptoms (pain medications)
4. Transport considerations
   a. Persistent pain for greater than six hours requires transport
   b. Gentle but rapid transport
5. Psychological support/communications strategies
   a. Actions reflect a calm, caring, competent attitude
   b. Keep patient and significant others informed of your actions