

The 411 on Gallbladders (*Interview Transcripts*)

Andrei Froehling, M.D., General Surgeon, OSF HealthCare

“The function of the gallbladder is to concentrate a substance made by the liver called bile. Whenever we eat a meal, the gallbladder squeezes, pushes the food into the first part of our small bowel, and helps us digest fatty foods.” (:12)

Andrei Froehling, M.D., General Surgeon, OSF HealthCare

“The most common sign or symptom of having issues with your gallbladder is whenever you eat fatty foods, or sometimes just any foods, you can start to experience pain a couple minutes afterwards in the right upper side of your belly. Sometimes it goes up to your right shoulder as well.” (:16)

Andrei Froehling, M.D., General Surgeon, OSF HealthCare

“Sometimes the myriad of issues with the gallbladder can present atypically. Sometimes the pain is more upper rather than just to the right side. People can also experience pain going to their back, which could be a sign of a gallstone actually falling into the main biliary system and could cause pancreatitis.” (:19)

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“Outside of stones, the issue people usually have with their gallbladder is something called biliary dyskinesia where the gallbladder does not contract properly, and sometimes this warrants removal.” (:14)

Andrei Froehling, M.D., General Surgeon, OSF HealthCare

“The most problematic symptom of a gallbladder issue is pain that persists and does not go away. This is usually a sign of what is called acute cholecystitis, which is an infection of the gallbladder usually because of a stone blocking the exit of it.” (:12)