

## DESCRIPTION

Hemorrhoids are swollen veins in the rectum or anus.

**INTERNAL:** Located inside the rectum, internal hemorrhoids are typically associated with painless bleeding.

**EXTERNAL:** These involve the veins outside the anus. They may cause itching, pain and bleeding.

**PROLAPSED:** Begin as internal hemorrhoids that swell and bulge outside the anus. These may be gently pushed back into place or may return by themselves.

**THROMBOSED:** Occur when a blood clot forms inside a hemorrhoid. These usually require drainage and can be quite painful. Depending on the severity of your condition, the doctor may be able to treat a thrombosed, external hemorrhoid during your visit. Internal hemorrhoids that are thrombosed cannot be treated in a clinic setting and require follow-up care from a specialist.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- A tender lump in or around the anus.
- Itching especially after a bowel movement.
- Blood in the toilet after a bowel movement or blood on the toilet paper after wiping.
- Other conditions may also cause similar symptoms so it is important to be seen by a doctor if you suspect you might have hemorrhoids.

## CAUSES

Hemorrhoids are caused by increased pressure in the veins of the anus or rectum. Some of the common causes are:

- Constipation
- Straining during bowel movements
- Sitting on the toilet too long
- Pregnancy
- Obesity
- Liver Disease

## GENERAL MEASURES

- To prevent constipation, eat a well-balanced diet that contains many high-fiber foods.
- Drink 8 to 10 glasses of fluid daily.
- Avoid laxatives except bulk-forming laxatives such as Fibercon and Metamucil.
- In order to help hemorrhoids heal properly it is important to keep the area clean. Gently clean the anal area after each bowel movement. It may help to use moisten cloths such as a baby wipes.
- Sitz Baths are helpful in keeping the area clean, as well as soothing painful hemorrhoids. Sit down into a bath tub with only a few inches of warm water. Swish from side to side to allow water to cleanse the area. Try to do this 3 or 4 times a day for 15 minutes at a time.
- When sitting on the toilet, place feet on a low footstool to aid bowel movement.
- Follow up as directed by your physician.

## COMFORT MEASURES

- Ice Packs for swelling.
- Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen for pain.
- Over the counter wipes, pads, or creams that contain witch hazel or another “numbing” agent.
- Hydrocortisone cream to help relieve itching.

## YOUR PHYSICIAN MAY PRESCRIBE

- Stool softeners.
- A cream, suppository or foam to help relieve pain and swelling.

## SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF

- You experience increased pain or swelling.
- You develop abdominal pain or are vomiting.
- You develop a fever.
- You notice blood in your stools or your stools become dark or tarry.