



HEMORRHOID HEALTH

Overview

Hemorrhoids are veins around the anus or lower rectum that have become swollen and inflamed. Hemorrhoids can happen either inside the anus or under the skin around the anus. They are common in both men and women, and can result from straining to have a bowel movement. Other factors that can lead to hemorrhoids are pregnancy, obesity, aging and chronic constipation or diarrhea.

Warning Signs & Symptoms

Hemorrhoids are so common that about half of all people will have them at some point by the time they turn 50. The most common symptom of internal hemorrhoids is bright red blood covering the stool, on toilet paper or in the toilet bowl. Other symptoms of internal hemorrhoids are itching, pain and discomfort. External hemorrhoids have the same symptoms, but you may also experience a hard, painful lump that is a result of blood pooling or clotting under the skin.

Treatments/Procedures

There are a variety of treatment options for hemorrhoids, which may include a warm bath and a cream or other medicine. Patients with large hemorrhoids or ones that have not responded to other treatments may need banding or surgery. [Click here to learn more about hemorrhoid banding.](#)

Even if you choose to treat hemorrhoids at home, you should see a doctor if there is any rectal bleeding to rule out a more serious condition like colorectal cancer.

Prevention

The best way to prevent hemorrhoids is with regular, healthy stools. Stools that can pass easily decrease pressure and straining — both risk factors for hemorrhoids. Also, be sure to empty bowels as soon as possible after the urge occurs.

Lifestyle changes can also help prevent hemorrhoids. Adding exercise to your routine, walking regularly, increasing dietary fiber intake and drinking plenty of water are all ways to help produce soft and easy-to-pass stools.

Rehabilitation

During the procedure, the doctor will place a tube-like instrument into your anus in order to examine it. He or she will then put a tight band around the hemorrhoid to restrict the blood flow so it can dry up and fall off. The hemorrhoids will fall off about a week or so after the procedure.

After the procedure, you should expect some pain as the anus tightens and relaxes. But after gradually returning to normal activities, you can expect a complete recovery in a few days up to a week.