

Disorders of the Anus

Hemorrhoids, Pruritis Ani and Anal Fissures

Hemorrhoids

Hemorrhoids are abnormally enlarged or dilated veins around the anal opening.

Symptoms include:

- Itching
- Pain
- Bright red bleeding
- Soiling of undergarments

Causes of Hemorrhoids:

- A low-fiber diet (causes hard stool that can only be passed with straining)
- Pregnancy (pressure of the growing fetus on the pelvic veins and hormonal changes)

Treatment:

- Increase dietary fiber
- Increase fluids to 6-8 glasses of non-alcoholic fluid daily
- Defecate as soon as the urge arises
- Warm bath soaks several times daily
- Avoid excessive wiping
- Over-the-counter creams (Preparation-H & Anusol-HC)
- Prescription creams (Anal-Pram)
- Surgery for severe cases

For further information on this conditions click on the following web link:

<http://www.digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/hemorrhoids/Hemorrhoids.pdf>

Pruritis Ani

Pruritis ani is simply Latin for 'anal itching' (itching around the anus). Children and adults alike suffer from this common condition, which is most troublesome at night or following bowel movements.

Causes of pruritis ani include:

- Fecal matter retained in the moist folds surrounding the anus
- Under-cleansing
- Over-cleansing
- Improper cleansing of the area
- Excessive sweating around the anus

- Tight-fitting clothing
- Certain beverages, including alcohol, citrus drinks and caffeine can aggravate itching
- Highly spiced food, chocolate, nuts and popcorn can also irritate the area.

Treatment: Most cases are easily managed by:

- Applying a hydrocortisone product for relief from itching
- Gently cleansing with plain water and use of cornstarch if moist, or Vaseline if dry.
- Avoiding soap
- Avoiding scratching or excessive rubbing the area.
- Not wearing tight clothing
- Eliminating irritant foods and beverages (see list above).

For further information on this conditions click on the following web link:

<http://mayoclinic.com/health/anal-itching/DS00453>

Anal Fissure

An anal fissure is a common condition in which the lining of the anal tissue becomes torn. This produces pain, bleeding or burning during bowel movements, which may last for several hours after the last bowel movement.

Symptoms include:

- Bleeding with streaks on the outside of the stool
- Constipation
- Itching
- Discharge

Causes of Anal Fissures

- Excessive wiping
- Constipation with large, hard stools
- Episodes of diarrhea

Treatment of Fissures

- Hydrocortisone cream may control the pain, burning, and itching during the natural healing process (most anal fissures will heal with time)
- Chronic fissures may require more extensive treatment
- Surgical procedures may be necessary

For further information on this condition click on the following web link:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/anal-fissure/DS00762>