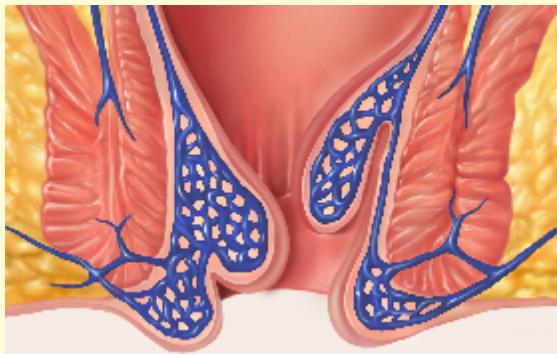


Patient Education Program

What You Should Know About Hemorrhoid Surgery



HEMORRHOIDS are a normal part of the anatomy. We are born with them. In fact, we have two sets; internal and external. The external hemorrhoids tend to hurt. The internal hemorrhoids tend to bleed, soil, itch, ache, and can 'block' a bowel movement from passing.

Initial treatment may involve the following:

1. Developing a regular, easy bowel movement:
 - Fiber supplements (e.g. Metamucil, Citrucel, etc.) are recommended.
 - Use Tucks or Non-Alcoholic baby wipes to clean.
2. Shrink the Hemorrhoids:
 - Cortisone cream or suppositories are used to shrink the hemorrhoids.
3. Relieve the Pain:
 - Warm compresses are offered for severe cases.

Take a washcloth, dip it in warm water, and then wring it out so that is damp. Roll it up tightly like a cigar. Place it gently on the hemorrhoids, place a dry towel on your heating pad, and sit on this for 30 minutes at a time, _____ times/day.

It takes weeks to heal properly. During this time you may have days when it seems healed, only to have a 'bad' bowel movement and a recurrence of symptoms.

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WHAT IS INVOLVED WITH SURGERY?

When these measures fail, either selective treatment for the internal hemorrhoids, or operative excision of both inside and outside hemorrhoids is considered.

When the internal and external hemorrhoids are so large that they merge into one entity, then surgery becomes the best option.

Hemorrhoidectomy is a good operation with excellent results for most patients. It is done as an outpatient procedure. The advantages of surgery include long-term relief from pain, bleeding, itching, and soiling. Time off of work will depend on your pain threshold, how well you can soften the bowel movement, and what type of work you do.

CAN THERE BE ANY COMPLICATIONS?

The complications of hemorrhoid surgery include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Pain as you heal: The most common problem is intense pain as you heal. You will need anywhere from 1-6 weeks off work, depending on the number of hemorrhoids removed, your pain threshold, and the type of work you do.
- (2) Trouble Urinating: Some patients experience trouble urinating immediately after the operation, requiring a catheter to be placed in the bladder for several days.
- (3) Infection: On a rare occasion, infection can develop requiring hospitalization, antibiotics, and further surgery.
- (4) Bleeding: Everyone sees a teaspoon or tablespoon of blood now and then, but if a larger blood vessel is torn open, the bleeding can be *heavy*. Apply pressure and go immediately to the ER.
- (5) Anus heals too tight: Occasionally the anus heals 'too tight', or the wounds are slow to heal requiring further surgery.