Hemorrhoids (Piles)

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Definition

Hemorrhoids are defined as an abnormal enlargement of veins in the anal area. Hemorrhoids are either inside the anus (internal) or under the skin around the anus (external).

Introduction

The exact causal mechanism for hemorrhoid formation is unknown. Hemorrhoids are caused by increased pressure in the veins of the anus. The most common cause is straining at bowel movements. Chronic constipation, prolonged sitting (sedentary habits), anal infection, obesity, inadequate dietary fiber and prolonged coughing or sneezing, are the contributing factors. Complaint of anal itching may also be present. Hemorrhoids are very common, especially during pregnancy and after childbirth.

External (outside) hemorrhoids develop near the anus and are covered by very sensitive skin. If a blood clot develops in one of them, a painful swelling may occur. The external hemorrhoid feels like a hard, sensitive lump. It bleeds only if it ruptures.

Internal (inside) hemorrhoids develop within the anus beneath the lining. Painless bleeding and protrusion during bowel movements are the most common symptom. However, an internal hemorrhoid can cause severe pain if it is completely "prolapsed" - protrudes from the anal opening and cannot be pushed back inside.
Did you know...

- Hemorrhoids are natural? Everyone has them.
- Hemorrhoids are cushions of tissue that swell gently to aid the process of elimination. You'll begin to notice hemorrhoids only when they begin to swell too much.
- More than half the population will develop hemorrhoids, usually after the age 30.
- The average person suffers in silence for a long period before seeking medical advice.
- Today's treatment methods make some types of hemorrhoid removal much less painful.

Other Anal Problems associated with Hemorrhoids

Other problems may cause discomfort in the anal area. A fissure, or crack in the anal canal's skin, may be painful and bleed. A fistula, and infected pathway, may develop as an abscess works its way from inside the canal to outside the skin. It may be either painful or painless, and usually causes a lot of damage.

Do Hemorrhoids lead to Cancer?

No. There is no relationship between hemorrhoids and cancer. However, the symptoms of hemorrhoids, particularly bleeding, are similar to those of colorectal cancer and other diseases of the digestive system. Therefore, it is important that a Doctor should investigate all symptoms. Do not rely on over-the-counter medications or other self-treatments. Consult a colorectal surgeon first so your symptoms can be properly evaluated and effective treatment prescribed.

Symptoms

Hemorrhoids usually are not dangerous or life threatening. In most cases, hemorrhoidal symptoms will go away within a few days. Although many people have hemorrhoids, not all experience symptoms.

The most common symptom of internal hemorrhoids is bright red blood covering the stool, on toilet paper, or in the toilet bowl; however, there are other causes such as colitis, polyps, or cancerous and non-cancerous tumors. Many anorectal problems, including fissures, fistulae, abscesses, or irritation and itching (pruritus ani), have similar symptoms and are incorrectly referred to as hemorrhoids.

Symptoms of external hemorrhoids may include painful swelling or a hard lump around the anus that results when a blood clot forms.

Diagnostic Tests

Hemorrhoids are easily diagnosed by direct rectal examination or anoscopy.
Preventive Guidelines

- The best way to prevent hemorrhoids is to keep stools soft so they pass easily, thus decreasing pressure and straining, and to empty bowels as soon as possible after the urge occurs.
- To prevent straining don't head for the toilet until you feel the urge. Once you are there, bend way forward with your head between your knees. Breathe deeply. Deep breathing puts pressure on the diaphragm, which puts pressure on the bowel. Wait two or three extra minutes to make sure evacuation is complete.
- In addition, a person should not sit on the toilet for a long period of time.
- Exercise regularly, especially walk.
- Have a high fiber diet generous in whole grains, vegetables, beans and fruits. The addition of bulk forming agents or stool softeners may be indicated. Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily. Dietary changes will also help relieve the pain caused by excessively hard stools.

Treatment

Mild symptoms can be relieved frequently by increasing the amount of fiber and fluids in the diet. Eliminating excessive straining reduces the pressure on hemorrhoids and helps prevent them from protruding. A Sitz bath - sitting in plain warm water for about 10 minutes - can also provide some relief.

With these measures, the pain and swelling of most symptomatic hemorrhoids will decrease in two to seven days, and the firm lump should recede within four to six weeks. In cases of severe, persistent pain, consult your physician.

Special treatment includes:

1. **Ligation** - the rubber band treatment - works effectively on internal hemorrhoids that protrude with bowel movements. A small rubber band is placed over the hemorrhoid, cutting off its blood supply. The hemorrhoid and the band fall off in a few days and the wound usually heals in a week or two. This procedure sometimes produces mild discomfort and bleeding.

2. **Injection and Coagulation** can also be used on bleeding hemorrhoids that do not protrude. Both methods are relatively painless and cause the hemorrhoid to shrivel up.
3. **Hemorrhoidectomy** - surgery to remove the hemorrhoids - is the best method for the permanent removal of hemorrhoids. It is necessary when:

   a. Clots repeatedly form in external hemorrhoids;
   b. Ligation fails to treat internal hemorrhoids;
   c. The protruding hemorrhoid cannot be reduced; or
   d. There is persistent bleeding.

**Homoeopathic Remedies**

Most commonly homoeopathic remedies used for the treatment are:

**ACID MUR:** Hemorrhoids most sensitive to all touch; even sheet of toilet paper is painful. Anal itching and prolapsus ani while urinating. Hemorrhoids during pregnancy; bluish, hot, with violent stitches.

**AESCULUS HIP:** Hard, dry, difficult stools. Rectum dry, hot; "full of small sticks." Knife-like pains shoot up. Severe lumbo-sacral backache. Stools followed by fullness in rectum, and intense pain for hours (Nit.ac., Aloe, Ign., Sul., etc.). Painful, purple external piles, with burning (Collinsonia's bleed more). A queer sensation, a bug crawling from anus.

**ALOES:** Constant bearing downs in rectum; bleeding, sores, and hot; relieved by cold water. Hemorrhoids protrude like grapes; very sore and tender; better cold water application. Burning in anus and rectum. Constipation, with heavy pressure in lower part of abdomen.

**ALUMEN:** Ineffectual urging: or several days without desire for stool. No ability to pass stool. Long useless straining, then after many days stool is passed - an agglomeration of little hard balls. After stool, sensation as if rectums still full (Nux.). Hemorrhoids ulcerate: prolonged suffering after stool (Nit.ac., Aesc., etc.).

**ARSENICUM ALBUM:** Constipation with tenesmus: with pain in bowels. Hemorrhoids with stitching pain walking and sitting, but not at stool: pain like slow pricks of a hot needle: protrude like coals of fire. Burning pains anus, relieved by heat.

**BARYTA CARB:** Constipation, with hard, knotty stools. Hemorrhoids protrude on urinating. Crawling in rectum. Oozing at anus.

**CAPSICUM:** bleeding piles, with soreness of anus. Stinging pain during stool.

CAUSTICUM: Frequent ineffectual efforts to stool, with pain, anxiety and redness of face. Rectum inactive: fills with hard stool, which pass involuntarily and unnoticed (Aloe). Passes little balls unnoticed. Stool tough and shiny: shines like grease. Passes better standing. Hemorrhoids: impeding stools: swell; itch; stitch; worse walking; thinking of them; preaching or straining voice. (Comp. Nux.).


GRAPHITES: is one of our best remedies in constipation, there is no urging. The patient sometimes goes days without a stool, and when it does come it is composed of little round balls, knotted together with shreds of mucus and accompanied with great pain when passing, owing to the fissure. These fissures, as well as the hemorrhoids that accompany them, burn, smart and itch intolerably. Excessive soreness of the anus in making the post defecation toilet is an indication for its use. Four other remedies are usually to be thought of in this condition of fissure of the anus; they are Silicea, Nitric acid, Paeonia and Ratanhia; these, with Graphites, will remove in most cases the underlying disease leading to the fissure. Aching of the anus after stool is also characteristic of Graphite's, and sometimes we have with the drug ineffectual urging. The mucus-coated stool, the extreme soreness of the anus.


IGNATIA: According to Dr. Carroll Dunham, where the stitches, itching or pain seems to go upward in rectum Ignatia is the remedy. Stools pass with difficulty; painful constriction of anus after stool. Stitches in hemorrhoids during cough. Stitches from anus deep into rectum. Hemorrhage and pain; worse when stool is loose.


LYCOPODIUM: Like Nux Vom, Lycopodium has a sensation after stool as if something remained behind. Constipation, due to constriction of the rectum (Silicea). The constipation, too, is apt to be associated with the hemorrhoids. The rectum contracts & protrudes with the stool. The stools are dry and hard, or the first part hard, the last soft. Useful in the constipation of children and pregnant women.

LYCOPUS VIRGINICUS: Dr. Proell said that Lycopus Vir. has the peculiar power to bring back haemorrhoidal fluxes that have been suppressed, or suddenly ceased even for years. The return always brought great relief to the patient who developed some other and worse ill from the suppression, but not cure, of the hemorrhoids. Bleeding from rectum. Hemorrhoids.
**MILLEFOLIUM:** Hemorrhage from bowels. Bleeding hemorrhoids.

**NATRUM MURIATICUM:** Stool is a hard and crumby; the rectum is dry, the stool is hard to expel and causes bleeding, smarting and soreness in the rectum. There is ineffectual urging to stool, with stitches in the rectum.

**NEGUNDO:** It is claimed that the tincture, taken internally will give quick relief in cases of painfully engorged piles.

**NITRIC ACID:** Pain with stool as if something would be torn. Sticking pain (rectum) and spasmodic constriction (anus), during stool, and lasting many hours after (Aesc.). Fissures and hemorrhoids. Great pain after stool (even soft stool) lasts for hours. Burning in anus. Itching in rectum. Nitric acid affect especially parts where skin and mucous membrane join. Its pains are splinter pains, worse for contact. Nitric acid patient is very like the Sepia patient, but loves fat and salt (unlike Sepia).

**NUX VOMICA:** Constant urging for a stool which never comes; or a small stool is passed with urging, leaving sensation of more remaining behind. Always as if evacuation were incomplete. Ineffectual desire for stool. Tearing and sticking and contracting pain, as from piles in rectum and anus after a meal; and especially on exerting the mind, and studying. (Comp. Caust.) Bright blood with faeces, with constriction and contraction during stool. Nux Vom is the medicine of the sedentary, the studious, the hypersensitive and the irritable. The key to the Nux constipation is irregular peristalsis, itching, blind hemorrhoids, with ineffectual urging to stool; very painful; after drastic drugs

**PAEONIA:** Biting, itching in anus; orifice swollen. Burning in anus after stool; then internal chilliness. Painful ulcer, oozing offensive moisture on perineum. Hemorrhoids, fissures, ulceration of anus and perineum, purple, covered with crusts. Atrocious pains with and after each stool.

**PHOSPHORUS:** Inveterate constipation. Stool slender, long, dry, tough and hard voided with difficulty. "May be compared to a dog’s stool in appearance and manner of evacuation." Paralysis of bowel, so that it is impossible to strain at stool (Alum). Discharge of blood from rectum, during stool. Bleeding hemorrhoids.

**RATANHIA:** Aches, as if full of broken glass. Anus aches and burns for hours after stool. Feels constricted. Dry heat at anus, with sudden knife-like stitches. Stools must be forced with great effort; protrusion of hemorrhoids. Fissure of anus, with great constriction, burning like fire, as do the hemorrhoids; temporarily relieved by cold water. Fetid, thin diarrhoea; stools burn; burning pains before and after stools. Oozing at anus. Itching of anus.
**SULPHUR:** Stool with "something left behind". Hard, as if burnt (Bry). Extreme constipation. Stool every 2, 3 or 4 days, hard and difficult. Stools large, painful: held back from pain. Sulphur is a warm patient; hungry about one A.M.; kicks off clothes at night; puts feet out; hungry for fat, for everything. Red orifices; acrid & excoriating discharges. Itching and burning of anus; piles dependent upon abdominal plethora. Frequent, unsuccessful desire; hard, knotty, and insufficient. Child afraid on account of pain. Redness around the anus, with itching.

**THUJA:** Difficult evacuation after 2, 3, or 8 days; subsequent burning in anus (Bry.). Moisture at anus. Anus fissured; painful; surrounded with flat warts. Violent pains compel cessation of effort (Sul.). Stool recedes (Sil. Sanic.).

**For external use** ointments of Aesculus Hip, Hammamelis are useful in relieving inflammation & pain of Hemorrhoids and Fissures.

**WARNING**

"Under no circumstances one should take these medicines by itself."
The above given details about the medicines for treatment of Hemorrhoids / Piles should be taken under the proper guidance of a qualified & registered Homoeopathic Physician.