

Bay Area Colon & Rectal Surgeons

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Self-care Tips for Hemorrhoids

Description and Symptoms:

Hemorrhoids and Piles are two terms used to describe inflammation and swelling in the veins around the anus. Hemorrhoids may develop inside or outside the anus. Straining to pass hard, compacted stools sometimes causes these veins to become enlarged and inflamed. Symptoms of hemorrhoids can consist of tenderness, pain and sometimes bleeding. Generally, hemorrhoids last for several days or weeks and often reoccur.

Prevention:

Keep your stool soft. Include plenty of water, fresh fruits, vegetables, & whole grains in your diet. You can add two (2) tablespoons of Metamucil to your diet each day (any fiber supplement will work). Avoid sitting too long, which restricts blood flow around the anus. Do not strain during bowel movements. It is very important that you relax and take your time in the bathroom.

Home Treatment:

Always wear cotton underwear and loose clothing. When having bowel movements, use pre-moistened paper towel to prevent irritation caused by excessive wiping. Alcohol free baby wipes, preparation H, or Tucks Medicated wipes usually work well. After drying, apply Zinc Oxide (paste or powder), Petroleum Jelly, Hydrocortisone (0.5%), or an over-the-counter medication cream to protect against further irritation and ease the passage of stool. However, avoid anal ointments that contain local anesthetic compound, as they may cause an allergic reaction. If you experience any itching, use cold compress four (4) times a day, 10 minutes at a time, if that doesn't work, you can try over-the-counter anti-itching products. Soaking in a warm bath will be soothing but it may worsen itching. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office.