



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

An abscess (collection of pus due to infection) that develops in the area around the anus and rectum. They occur more frequently in men and in people with digestive diseases. They may occur on the edge of the anal opening or deeper in the rectum.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Swelling in superficial abscesses.
- Rectal redness.
- Rectal tenderness.
- Throbbing pain.
- Fever and other toxic symptoms with deep abscesses.
- Pain, when having bowel movement.

CAUSES

Common bacteria such as staphylococci and *Escherichia coli* are the most common cause. Fungal infections sometimes cause abscesses.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- People with a digestive disease.
- Injections for internal hemorrhoids.
- Enema tip abrasions.
- Puncture wounds from eggshells or fish bones.
- Foreign objects.
- Prolapsed hemorrhoid.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Avoid constipation.
- Don't use enemas.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Slow healing depending on extent of disease, complete healing by 6 months if no complications.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Possible anal fistula.
- Recurrence of abscess if underlying cause not corrected.



TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Diagnosis is determined by a physical examination.
- Treatment involves surgery to open and drain the abscess.
- Local anesthetic used during surgical procedure. For abscess deeper in rectum, a general anesthetic is frequently used.
- Sitz baths every 2-4 hours after surgery. Sit in a bathtub with 6-8 inches of warm water for 20 minutes.
- Heating pad, heat lamp or warm compress as needed for pain.
- Prevent constipation. Don't suppress the urge to have a bowel movement, even though you may anticipate pain. Constipation can increase pressure at the wound site.
- Follow doctor's instructions for dressing changes and keeping surgical area clean.

MEDICATIONS

- Antibiotics or antifungal medications may be prescribed for infection.
- Stool softening laxatives to help prevent constipation.

ACTIVITY

Return to normal activities as soon as possible after surgery.

DIET

An increase in fiber in the diet may help reduce risk of constipation.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of anorectal abscess.
- New or unexplained symptoms develop. Drugs used in treatment may produce side effects.