

BAY AREA COLON AND RECTAL SURGEONS

A DIVISION OF BASS MEDICAL GROUP

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HEMORRHOID SELF-CARE TIPS

Hemorrhoids and piles are two terms used to describe inflammation and swelling in the veins around the anus. Hemorrhoids may develop either inside or on the outside of 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. Hemorrhoids generally last for several days or weeks and often recur.

PREVENTION

Keep your stools soft. Include plenty of water, fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains in your diet. Add two tablespoons of bran or Metamucil to your diet each day. Avoid sitting too much, which restricts blood flow around the anus. Do not strain during bowel movements. It is very important to take your time and relax.

HOME TREATMENT

Always wear cotton underwear and loose clothing. When having a bowel movement, use pre-moistened tissues to prevent irritation caused by excessive wiping. Baby wipes, Preparation H, or Tucks medicated wipes usually work very well. After drying, apply zinc oxide (paste or powder), petroleum jelly, Hydrocortisone 0.5% or an over the counter medicated cream. This protects against further irritation and eases the passages of stools; however, avoid anal ointments that contain a local anesthetic compound, as these may cause an allergic reaction. If you experience any itching, use cold compresses four times a day, 10 minutes at a time. If that does not work, try an over the counter anti itching product. Soaking in a warm bath will be soothing but it may worsen the itching.