

Patient Information Leaflet

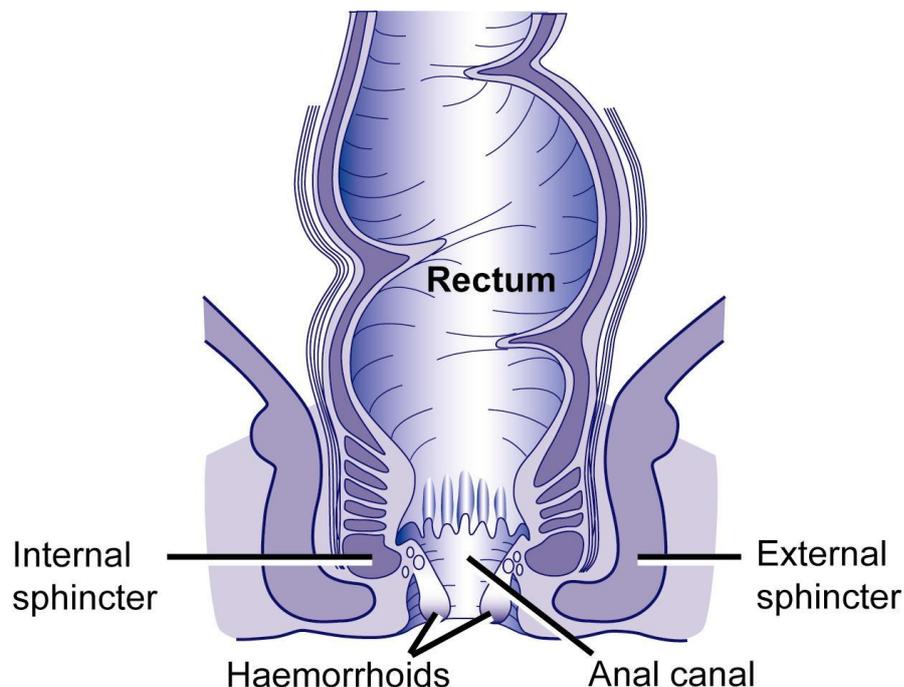


Haemorrhoids - Banding

Haemorrhoids

What are haemorrhoids?

Everyone has swellings in the anal canal (back passage) called anal cushions. These bulges in the lining of the anal canal act like the washer on a tap and help to prevent leaks from the back passage and maintain continence. Over time these swellings can lose their normal structure and become stretched. This can cause them to bleed, or protrude outside the anus (prolapse). When this happens they are called haemorrhoids, or piles. They can lead to symptoms including bleeding, discomfort, itching and a feeling of incomplete bowel emptying. It is not known why some people suffer from haemorrhoids and others do not. There is an association with constipation and straining, but they can be associated with a normal bowel habit. They are more common in some families and during or after pregnancy. Up to one in three people will suffer from haemorrhoids during their lifetime. There are a number of different treatments. Banding is sometimes helpful for more minor degrees of haemorrhoids.



What is 'banding' of haemorrhoids?

Banding your haemorrhoids involves using a special instrument to put a very tight elastic band around the base of the haemorrhoid. This cuts off some of the blood supply to the haemorrhoid swelling and fixes the lining of the anal canal in place to prevent further prolapse. The actual procedure involves a local anaesthetic and only takes a few minutes to complete. The area heals over during the following three or four weeks.

What should I do when I get home?

You may experience some discomfort or a feeling of fullness in the anus for a day or so after the banding. This is quite normal. You should take regular painkillers (e.g. paracetamol) if needed. If these are not sufficient, you should contact your doctor or pharmacist. Occasionally patients get more severe pain after banding, and if this occurs you should contact your doctor.

You can bathe or shower as you wish.

You can return to normal activities as soon as you feel comfortable.

You may see some minor spots of blood on the stools or on the paper when you wipe yourself after opening your bowels. This will settle with time. Patients sometimes get further bleeding about seven to 10 days after banding. This is due to the 'scab' coming off and the wound healing. It should settle by itself, but if it doesn't, or you lose a large amount of blood or pass clots, you should contact your doctor.

Can I prevent the haemorrhoids from coming back?

Unfortunately, having your haemorrhoids banded does not guarantee that they will never come back. Banding usually improves symptoms for a few months, but in some cases the banding will need to be repeated. If the haemorrhoids develop they may require an operation. Increasing the fibre in your diet and your fluid intake can help prevent further problems with haemorrhoids. We know that avoiding straining and constipation is the most useful thing patients can do to prevent the problem coming back. If the fibre content of your diet is not sufficient to keep your stools soft, then a fibre supplement (such as Fybogel) can help.

What should I do if I want further information?

If you have a problem or a question immediately after you go home, please call the Outpatient Department during normal opening hours (Mon-Fri 9pm-5pm). If the problem occurs outside these hours, please contact your family doctor or district nurse for advice.

Contact details:

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