

Conservative Treatment for Hemorrhoids

What is a hemorrhoid:

Hemorrhoids are swollen, enlarged veins that form inside and outside of your anus and rectum. They can be painful and uncomfortable and cause rectal bleeding. Hemorrhoids can be caused by constipation, lack of fiber within your diet, prolonged sitting on a toilet or hard surfaces, pregnancy and childbirth, or heavy lifting. Hemorrhoids can cause rectal bleeding, anal itching, anal swelling, anal pressure, and can be both painless and painful.

Dietary and Lifestyle Modifications:

- Fiber intake can improve symptoms of hemorrhoid bleeding, mild rectal prolapse, pain and itching
 - Ingest 20-35 grams of fiber per day
- Drink plenty of water: 50-65 ounces per day
- Refrain from straining
- Refrain from prolonged sitting on the toilet
- Refrain from prolonged sitting on hard surfaces. Take breaks and change positions when you can
- Engage in regular exercise
- Avoid heavy lifting
- Avoid medications or foods that cause constipation or diarrhea

Medication Management:

- **Topical Analgesics**, such as lidocaine, are effective for relieving acute pain. Lidocaine should not be used for longer than one week to avoid adverse effects.
- **Topical Steroids**, such as hydrocortisone cream, may shrink hemorrhoids and relieve anal itching. Steroid cream should be applied twice a day for no more than 7 days. Long-term use should be avoided because of the potential thinning of perianal and anal mucosa.

Comfort Measures:

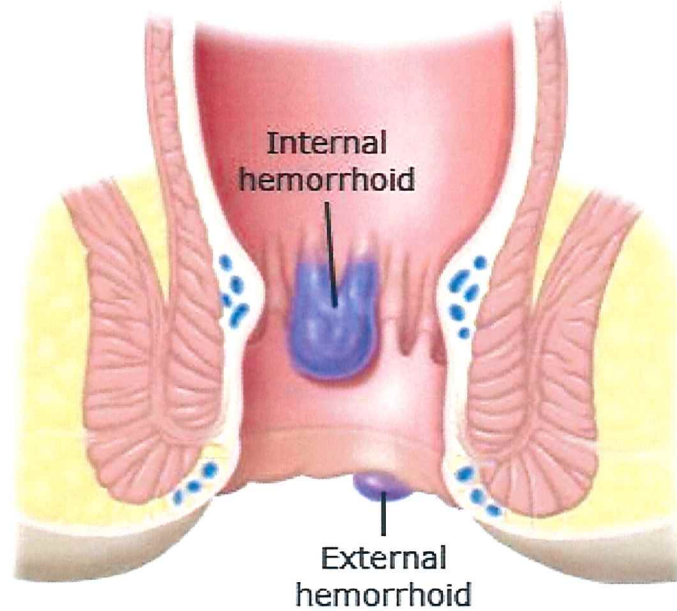
- **Sitz Baths** are a topical treatment to help reduce swelling, relax sphincter muscles, and relieve anal irritation/itching for acute flare-ups of hemorrhoids

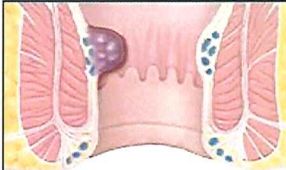
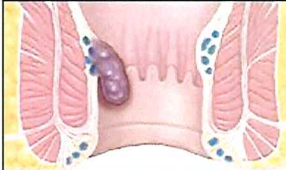
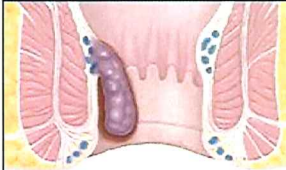
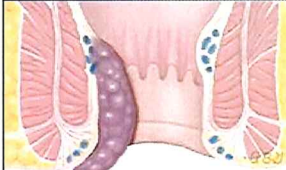
Procedures:

- **Rubber Band Ligation (RBL)** is a procedure performed in the office on internal hemorrhoids. The provider places a rubber band on internal hemorrhoid tissue. The band stops the blood flow to the hemorrhoid. This causes the hemorrhoid to shrink and fall off in 7 to 10 days. Rubber band ligation is typically a painless procedure. You may experience a dull ache or feelings of pressure.

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Grade	Symptoms	Exam	Treatment	Illustration
1	Painless bleeding	Hemorrhoid with vascular engorgement bulging into anal canal without prolapse	First-line: Medical Second-line: Office procedures (eg, RBL)	
2	Painless bleeding, perianal itching	Hemorrhoid prolapses with straining but reduces spontaneously	First-line: Medical Second-line: Office procedures (eg, RBL)	
3	Painless bleeding, perianal itching, swelling, staining or soilage with mucus/feces	Hemorrhoid prolapses beyond the dentate line with straining and is only reducible by manual pressure	First-line: Medical Second-line: Office procedures (eg, RBL)	
4	Pain, bleeding, swelling, soilage with mucus/feces	Grossly evident prolapse of hemorrhoid tissue that is non-reducible; chronic inflammatory changes (mucosal atrophy, friability, maceration, and ulceration)	Surgical excision	

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