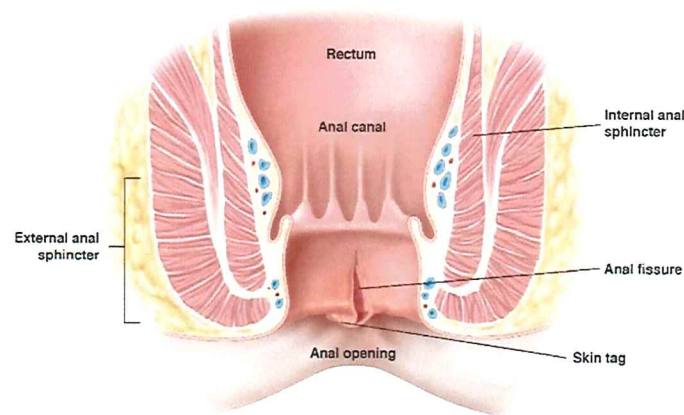


Anal Fissure

What is an Anal Fissure?

An Anal Fissure is a tear in the lining of the anus (the opening where feces are excreted). The tear extends into a circular ring of muscle called the internal anal sphincter. Once a fissure develops, the internal sphincter goes into spasm, causing further separation of the tear, decreasing blood flow to the area, impairing healing, and causing pain.



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Symptoms of an Anal Fissure:

- Bleeding, usually small amount of bright red blood
- Sensations of tearing, ripping, or burning following a bowel movement
- Severe rectal pain

Causes of an Anal Fissure:

- Usually caused by trauma that stretches the anal canal, such as passing of large and/or hard bowel movements
- Chronic diarrhea
- Laxative abuse
- Poor diet
- Previous Anal surgery
- History of childbirth
- Anal Sexual Intercourse
- Insertion of Foreign Items into Rectum

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Diagnosis:

Diagnosis is based on symptoms and physical examination. Sometimes, a colonoscopy needs to be performed to evaluate

Treatment:

- Initial treatment is aimed at eliminating constipation, or diarrhea, reducing anal sphincter spasms, and pain
- Daily Habits:
 - Increasing fiber within the diet to soften stool and bulk the stools. Fiber is found in fruits and vegetables.
 - The recommended amount of dietary fiber is 20-35 grams a day.
 - Examples of over-the-counter fiber supplements are: Metamucil, Citrucel, Bene-fiber, and Fibercon.
 - Increasing daily oral water intake
 - Performing warm Sitz Baths to help increase blood flow to the area to help promote healing and relaxation of the anal muscle.
- Medical Management:
 - Topical creams prescribed by your physician, or provider, such as topical Nifedipine or Diltiazem.
- Surgical Treatment:
 - Anal Fissures that fail to respond to conservative treatment, may require surgical intervention
 - An **Anal Sphincterotomy** consists of cutting a portion of the anal sphincter muscle to relax and open the area.
 - **Anal Botox Injection** is performed by injecting Botox, a neurotoxin, into the sphincter muscle to temporarily relax the anal muscle, allowing the fissure to heal.