



KANAKIA
Health Care

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Anal Fissures and Anal Fistula

What are anal fissures?

An anal fissure is a superficial tear in the anal lining, below the dentate margin. The tear causes the internal and external anal sphincter to go into a spasm (or become tight), this pulls the tear further prevent healing. Exposure to feces slows healing and causes infection.

What are the symptoms of anal fissures?

- Bleeding
- Burning/tearing sensation following a bowel movement
- Rectal pain
- A small lump or skin tag on the skin near the anal fissure

What are the causes and risk factors of anal fissures?

- Passing large or hard stools
- Constipation and straining during bowel movements
- Chronic diarrhea
- Crohn's disease
- Childbirth
- Age – infants and old adults
- Anal intercourse

What is the treatment of anal fissures?

- Eliminate constipation – increase liquids and fiber in the diet, add laxatives
- Relieve pain and spasm – Sitz bath, local ointment
- Allow fissure to heal
- Botulinum toxin injection
- Surgery in chronic and severe cases

What is an anal fistula?

An anal fistula is a small channel that develops between the terminal end of the intestines and the skin around the anus.

What are the causes of anal fistula?

In a majority of cases, anal fistula is caused by an anal abscess. Other less common causes are:

- Crohn's disease
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Trauma
- Tuberculosis
- Cancer
- Diverticulitis

What are the symptoms of anal fistula?

- The symptoms of anal fistula are:
- Bleeding
- Pain
- Bloody or foul smelling discharge and persistent drainage
- Irritation of skin around the anus
- Difficulty in sitting
- Fever
- Constipation

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How is an anal fistula diagnosed?

Anal fistula is diagnosed by visual inspection and if needed the inside of rectum is examined with a proctoscope. An ultrasound or MRI of the anal area may be done to better define the fistula tract.

What is the treatment for anal fistula?

Anal fistula is treated by surgery where the skin and muscle over the tract are cut open and left to heal from the inside out. A complex fistula may need placement of a special drain called seton for 6 weeks before surgery is done.

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