



Mucofalk®

Hemorrhoids and Hemorrhoidal Disease



Introduction

Hemorrhoids are part of the normal human anatomy.

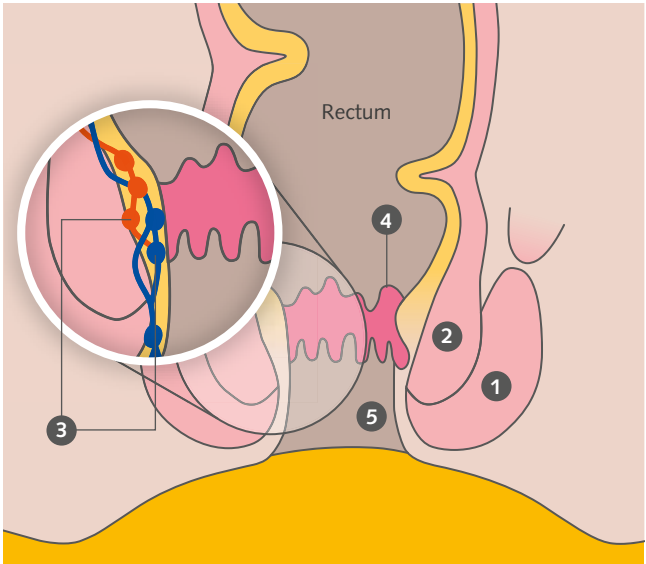
Hemorrhoids are blood-filled cushions that can swell and shrink. They are located at the junction between the rectum and the anal canal.

Hemorrhoids play an important role in precisely regulating bowel control (“continence”) by sealing off the anal canal. They are only considered to be unhealthy when they become enlarged, bleed, itch, or cause dampness or soiling. Although this condition is typically called just hemorrhoids, the proper term is hemorrhoidal disease.*

Hemorrhoidal disease is very common: about 80% of people above the age of 30 will experience hemorrhoid symptoms to some degree at least once in their lifetimes.



*In many countries, the term hemorrhoids refers to blood-filled cushions both inside (internal hemorrhoids) and outside (external hemorrhoids) the rectum. This booklet will focus on internal hemorrhoids.



- 1 External anal sphincter
- 2 Internal anal sphincter
- 3 Hemorrhoids (blood-filled cushions)
 - Arterial blood (coming from the heart)
 - Venous blood (going to the heart)
- 4 Transitional mucosa between the rectum and the anus
- 5 Anoderm: very sensitive to pain

Everybody has hemorrhoids: they are natural cushions filled with blood that help precisely regulate closure of the anus. During a bowel movement, the anal sphincter relaxes and blood flows out of the hemorrhoid cushions. Once the stool has passed, blood flows back into the hemorrhoids, making them thicker. This closes the anus securely.

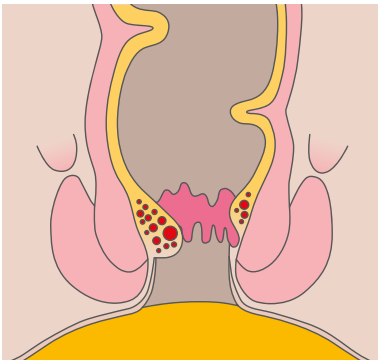
Classification

Changes in hemorrhoids can be classified into different severities based on their features.

Severity is typically classified in grades 1 to 4 (see illustrations). The severity of hemorrhoidal disease may change over time. This means that in the early stages, even simple measures can lead to improvement.



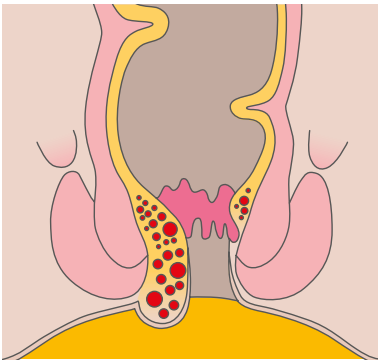
Grade 1 hemorrhoidal disease (not externally visible)



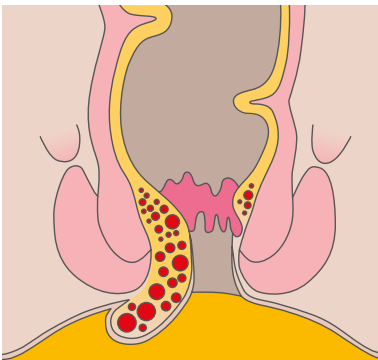
Grade 2 hemorrhoidal disease (prolapse possible during bowel movements)

However, if hemorrhoids are chronically enlarged or prolapsed (meaning they protrude from the anus), they are unlikely to heal spontaneously.

Hemorrhoids also typically change by season. In particular, they worsen when it gets warmer and you sweat more.

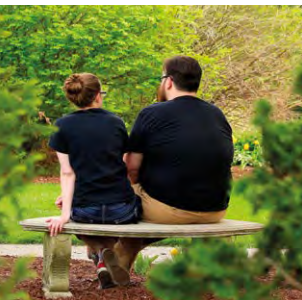


Grade 3 hemorrhoidal disease (prolapse during bowel movements, can be pushed back in by hand)



Grade 4 hemorrhoidal disease (prolapse cannot be pushed back in)

Causes and Symptoms



Being overweight, chronic constipation, a sedentary lifestyle, pregnancy, a family history of hemorrhoids, or sitting too long on the toilet are all factors that make hemorrhoidal disease more likely.

The most common symptoms are bright red bleeding during or just after a bowel movement, as well as burning and itching around the anus. Pain is not a typical symptom and indicates a more acute issue.

Symptoms such as dampness, mucus discharge, feeling a lump in the anus, or even incontinence may occur at later stages.

Even though enlarged hemorrhoids are very common and nearly every adult can be affected, it is important to remember that these symptoms might also be signs of another disease.

Bloody stools are a red flag that always need to be taken seriously and must be investigated by a doctor, preferably by colonoscopy. Inflammation or cancer in the digestive tract or anal region can also cause bleeding, dampness, or itching.



Treatment Options

You should always see a doctor if you have digestive issues or any of the symptoms listed above.

The vast majority of cases of hemorrhoidal disease can be treated with a conservative approach.



The primary goal of conservative treatment is to keep stools soft using dietary fiber and by drinking enough liquids. Soluble fiber such as psyllium husks (for example Mucofalk®) is able to absorb a large amount of water, which softens stools while keeping them solid.

Always avoid straining too much or sitting on the toilet for too long!

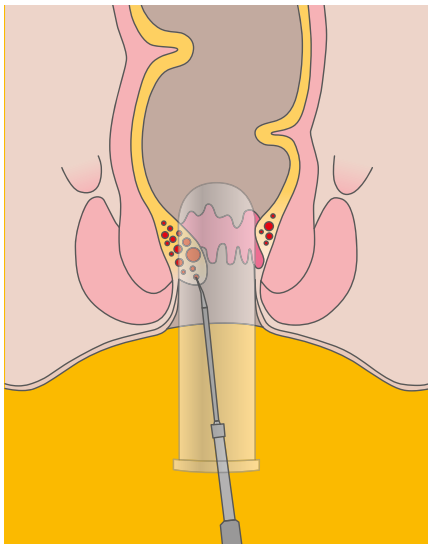


Treatment Options

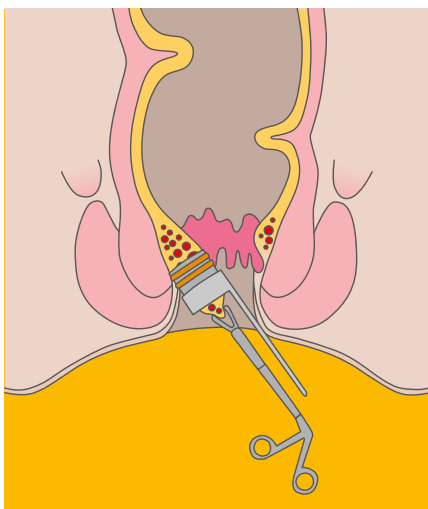
For **mild cases** of hemorrhoidal disease, ointments or suppositories may help relieve irritating symptoms such as dampness or itching.

The next level of treatment involves procedures called **sclerotherapy** and **rubber band ligation**. Both of these procedures can be performed in an outpatient setting.

- In sclerotherapy, a special solution is injected into the hemorrhoids to shrink them.
- Rubber band ligation cuts off blood flow to the hemorrhoids.
- Both of these treatments cause little to no discomfort when carried out correctly.
- Most people temporarily experience an unfamiliar feeling of blunt pressure around the anus that usually resolves completely within a few hours. With rubber band ligation, it is important to be aware that the rubber bands fall off after 5 to 10 days, which may lead to mild bleeding.
- For this reason, special precautions are required for patients taking medications that affect blood clotting. Major bleeding must always be treated by a doctor.



Sclerotherapy



Rubber band ligation

Treatment Options

Several different types of surgery are available for advanced hemorrhoidal disease. In the traditional procedures, the enlarged hemorrhoidal cushions are removed by surgery. This usually results in some amount of pain for the first 1 to 5 days after surgery that can be managed well with pain medication. Since this surgery usually leaves open wounds, proper wound care techniques must be practiced.

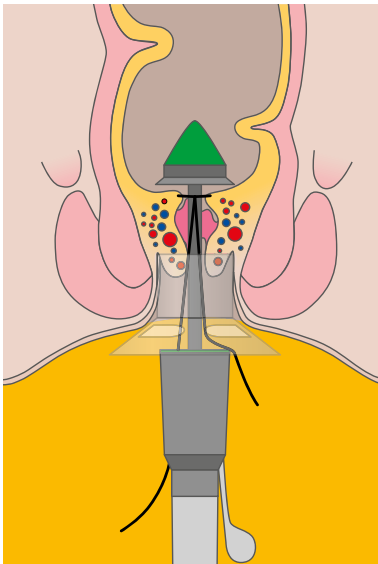
For patients with multiple enlarged hemorrhoids, a **stapling procedure** can also be performed. In this procedure, a special stapler is used to remove a ring-shaped strip of rectal tissue directly above the hemorrhoids themselves. This reduces the blood flow to the hemorrhoids and lifts them upwards into the correct anatomical position.

Wound care should ideally be performed using water. The use of pure water at a comfortable temperature with nothing added is recommended. A bidet makes cleaning even easier. Other possible options are sitz baths or rinses. Gently cleaning the wound for 1 to 2 minutes is more than enough.



Stapler surgery usually results in very little to no pain when performed properly. However, very intense pain may result if the staples are placed too low in the very sensitive anal region. In this case, a second operation to remove some of the staples may be necessary. This procedure also does not leave a wound, meaning no wound care is needed. Nonetheless, it is important to ensure your stools are soft after this type of surgery.

After any surgical procedure in the anal region, stool should be kept soft using appropriate measures (such as Mucofalk®).



Stapler surgery

Prevention

You can lower your risk of hemorrhoidal disease with just a few changes to your lifestyle and eating habits. Remember: preventing is better than treating!

High-fiber diet. A low-fiber diet leads to smaller and harder stools. This can cause the muscles of the anus to cramp up, making you strain more to pass a stool, and eventually making hemorrhoidal disease more likely. A high-fiber diet promotes healthy digestion by absorbing water into stools, which increases stool volume and makes stools softer. This eases bowel movements and normalizes the pressure in the colon and around the anus.

Drinking enough liquids. Make sure you drink at least 1.5 to 2 liters of liquids each day. The best choices are water, fruit teas, or diluted juices.

Avoid sitting for too long. There are many activities you can also do while standing up, like long phone calls at the office. Standing lowers the pressure on the blood vessels of the anus.

Only sit on the toilet for as long as necessary. When you sit on the toilet, your pelvic floor sags and the pressure on the blood vessels increases dramatically. Hemorrhoid problems often arise from sitting on the toilet for too long.

Avoid using damp toilet paper. This irritates the anus. It is better to wash the anus thoroughly with water.

Avoid straining. You should avoid sports that involve intense straining, like weightlifting. The considerable pressure that occurs during straining forces a large amount of blood into the pelvis and into hemorrhoids.

If you are overweight, try to lose weight. Being overweight puts extra strain on your pelvic floor. This causes the blood vessels in the anus to expand, which can lead to swelling of hemorrhoids.

Physical activity. Regular exercise or more physical activity is not only crucial for normal digestion, but also boosts overall health and can lower the risks of heart disease, diabetes and even cancer.

Avoid spicy foods and other irritating substances. Chili and other hot spices can burn and irritate the sensitive anal region. You should also avoid nicotine, caffeine, citrus fruits and highly-carbonated drinks.

Relax. New research increasingly shows how closely the gut and the brain are linked. Psychologists recommend techniques such as yoga or relaxing baths as short-term measures of freeing your mind and gut from harmful stress.



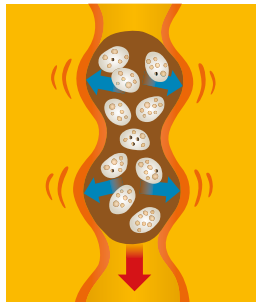
Mucofalk®: the natural support

Mucofalk® is plant-based and naturally promotes digestion. It is derived from a plant named *Plantago ovata*, often called psyllium, which is native to the Mediterranean region. Mucofalk® is manufactured from the husks of *Plantago ovata* seeds to medicinal quality using a special method. Thanks to both their natural properties and the special manufacturing process, psyllium husks are able to absorb much more water than psyllium seeds themselves, making them more effective.

Mucofalk® regulates the digestive process

The natural, long-lasting effects of Mucofalk® are similar to the effects of a healthy, balanced, high-fiber diet. Psyllium husks contain high levels of soluble fiber, which promotes bowel movements by absorbing water into partially-formed stools. This increases the size of stool while keeping it soft and easy to pass.

It also stimulates the rectum to empty and makes the defecation process easier.



Dietary fiber serves as food source for bacteria in the gut. This promotes the growth of healthy bacteria in the digestive tract, which are an important part of our immune system and help keep our bodies healthy.

for better digestion

The natural effects of psyllium are gentle and dependable.

Mucofalk® acts naturally and reliably in conditions for which easier bowel movements with soft stool is desirable, for example hemorrhoids. It is tolerated well. It is not known to cause habituation.

How and how much Mucofalk® should you take?

For gentler bowel movements, people with enlarged hemorrhoids should take one sachet or one level measuring spoonful two to three times per day, unless prescribed otherwise.* Take Mucofalk® by dissolving it in plenty of water (at least 150 ml/sachet or level measuring spoonful), stirring it, and drinking it immediately. You should then drink another glass of water. Since some people experience bloating at the beginning of treatment, you can also start with a lower daily dose.

You can find more information and download patient guides at www.mucofalk.de

You can also ask your doctor or pharmacist for additional free print booklets.



*Please consult the package insert for more details.

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Digestion. In Balance. Naturally.

Thanks to the gentle power of psyllium husks.

Reliable support for

- ✓ Chronic constipation
- ✓ Constipation-predominant irritable bowel syndrome
- ✓ Diarrhea of various causes
- ✓ Painful bowel movements of various causes, e.g. from hemorrhoids

In
pharmacies
only



www.mucofalk.de

Mucofalk® Apple/Orange/Fit Ispaghula husk 3.25 g / 5 g granules. For use in adults and adolescents from 12 years of age. **Active ingredient:** Ispaghula husk (*Plantago ovata* seed shells), ground. Contains sucrose. High sodium content. Please read the package leaflet. **Therapeutic indications:** Persistent (chronic) constipation. Conditions in which easier bowel movements with soft stool are desirable, e.g. cracks in the skin of the anal canal (anal fissures), haemorrhoids, painful bowel movements following rectal or anal surgery. Supportive treatment in diarrhoea due to various causes. Conditions in which an increased daily fibre intake may be advisable, e.g. as supportive treatment in irritable bowel syndrome in which constipation predominates. Additionally for Mucofalk® Fit: as an adjuvant to diet in hypercholesterolaemia (raised blood fat values). Date of information: 06/2023

For information on risks and side effects, please read the package leaflet and consult your doctor or pharmacist.



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