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Hemorrhoidectomy

Hemorrhoids are swollen blood vessels of the rectum. The vessels are located in the lowest area of the rectum and the anus. Hemorrhoids are often brought on by straining on the toilet. Some authorities claim 90 percent of people will have hemorrhoids at some time in their lives. Hemorrhoids are classified in two general categories: Internal and External.

Internal Hemorrhoids: This type of hemorrhoid is not easily detected because they are far enough inside the rectum you can't see or feel them. They don't usually hurt; however, they may bleed after a bowel movement.

External Hemorrhoids: This type is easily detectable. They are small swellings that may turn purple or blue if they become thrombosed, meaning a blood clot forms in the hemorrhoid. The clot stretches the sensitive skin and causes pain, which can arise suddenly and be severe.

Hemorrhoidectomy is the surgical removal of the swollen veins. The surgery itself takes between one and two hours. You may spend a couple of days in the hospital, however some people go home the same day. At the hospital, you will be given a sedative through an IV to make you sleepy. Then, a local anesthetic will be injected into the surrounding area. The hemorrhoidal vein and its overlying skin are cut and a suture is tied around the base of the hemorrhoid. The hemorrhoid is cut off just above the knot. The suture is absorbable so it does not have to be removed.

For internal hemorrhoids only, tight elastic bands can be placed around the base of the hemorrhoid. In a week or two, the hemorrhoid loses blood circulation and dies, and the hemorrhoid falls off. This procedure is called banding.

You will have some discomfort with bowel movements after surgery. You may feel like there is stool in your rectum or like the hemorrhoid is still there. As your tissues heal, this sensation will go away. Medication will be given to you to help relieve the pain. This should be taken as your doctor prescribes. You should keep your stools soft by using a stool softener. Your doctor will make some recommendations.

Do not try to delay your first bowel movement after surgery. This will only harden the stool. Be sure to eat a well balanced diet including fiber and lots of fluids.

You can expect some fluid drainage or bleeding after surgery. You may use either sterile gauze or sanitary napkins in your underwear. Be sure to change these frequently. You may also try sitz baths. Run some warm water, about 3 to 4 inches in the bath tub and sit in the tub. You can try adding a tablespoon of Epsom salts to the water. This may be done a few times per day.

You will need to return to the office after about one week. Please call us to make this appointment a day or so after surgery. Call anytime with concerns or questions.