

Valley Health

820

Bacteria not hemorrhoids cause that painful itching

Dear Dr. Meinig:

It seems silly for me to be writing to you about my hemorrhoid problem but the symptoms I have seem like they might have a nutritional significance. I have a couple of protruding hemorrhoids that don't hurt me any but they itch like crazy. None of the different medications I have used has been of any help at all. Scratching isn't exactly socially acceptable but at times I have to excuse myself and go to another room to relieve the itching. Do you have any little hints that might relieve this problem?

R.P.

Dear R.P.:

During the eight years as a participant with the Southern California Academy of Nutritional Research, the disease we found that was most often reported was that of hemorrhoids. This shouldn't surprise anyone as hemorrhoids have been recognized since antiquity. In fact, reports about them can be found in the ancient writings in Egypt as far

back as 300 B.C.

There are numbers of reports of hemorrhoids being responsible for the occurrence of certain historical events. The most outstanding of these claims is that the Battle of Waterloo might not have been lost if Napoleon had not been having so much trouble with his hemorrhoids.

In addition to hemorrhoids protruding and itching, they can also become swollen, painful, develop lumps and/or bleeding. If bleeding takes place, one must not resort to over-the-counter T.V. advertised, home remedies, but should see their physician to rule out more serious disease such as could come from bowel inflammation and benign or malignant tumors.

Internal hemorrhoids can bleed and protrude during bowel movements. For some they protrude all of the time. External hemorrhoids are veins that are located just under the skin outside the anus area. At times these develop a thrombus painful lump. When that occurs, physicians



Dr. George

By George Meinig, DDS

advise they be surgically removed. This is often done in the doctor's office, using a local anesthetic.

In spite of the great numbers of advertisements for the numerous remedies available to relieve itching hemorrhoids, doctors claim they just don't create itching. This will be

mighty hard for you to take when you know how much trouble you are experiencing.

The explanation becomes quite understandable when the cause is revealed, but it is difficult to understand why physicians don't seem to talk about it.

The trouble stems from incomplete wiping of the rectal area after a bowel movement. You will think that charge ridiculous but a simple test will demonstrate that our reliance upon toilet paper has been grossly misjudged.

After your next bowel movement, wipe as you usually do.

Then place two kleenex tissues together, fold once and wet them with warm or cold water and then wipe again, but before discarding the kleenex, look at it. You will be utterly amazed to see the amount of feces that remains on the skin.

The reason for the itching now becomes clear. Not only does the irritation come from the retained fecal material, but more so from the bacteria that

are present in one's stool as these organisms rapidly continue to grow and multiply when they are left on the skin.

Actually you will usually have to do this wet kleenex wiping two or three times before the rectal area is clean and free from fecal material.

If the use of kleenex proves troublesome, you can purchase Attend wipes at the drugstore. Other companies also make wipes, even medicated ones. The "Baby Fresh Brand" of infants' disposable wash cloths also work quite well. I don't know why companies don't advertise this use of their products as the bacteria accumulation can prove a problem in a number of other ways as well. Women are particularly prone to pick up vaginal or bladder infections from improper wiping.

Should this simple procedure not solve your problem, it is well to realize that hemorrhoids can arise for a variety of reasons such as constipation, diarrhea, straining, coughing,

infection, drugs, food, glandular changes and heredity. The presence of any of these difficulties are good reasons for you to consult with your family physician or a colon-rectal specialist about the specific problem.

Nutritional supplements have been suggested but most have been used too little to verify their reliability. People have reported good results after taking a bioflavanoid tablet three times a day. Some like rutin, one of the bioflavanoids. Others have found lactobacillus acidophilus and yogurt also help.

It is easy to become proficient, especially with the disposable wipes. When so you do so you will be amazed how readily the itching problem disappears and along with it one of the reasons for a surgical operation.