



## Banding of haemorrhoids (piles)

### What are haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids are prominent clumps of tissue containing blood vessels that lie in the back passage (lower rectum or anus). They are often called piles. Haemorrhoids usually occur in groups of three, inside and around the back passage.

### What symptoms will I have?

The symptoms you will have will depend on the size of the haemorrhoids. The smallest haemorrhoids may cause the loss of bright red blood during a bowel motion or there may be traces of blood on the toilet tissue. Larger haemorrhoids can drop down from the rectum when bowels are opened. If this happens they can be pushed back by using upward pressure after using the toilet. Other symptoms may include: itching, pain, discomfort, skin irritation or passing some mucus.

### Why do they occur?

There is a possibility that they are inherited. However, when several members of a family have haemorrhoids, these could be caused by a similar low fibre diet. Haemorrhoids cause more trouble if you are constipated. They can also appear during pregnancy. This is because of increased abdominal pressure on the pelvic blood vessels caused by the growing baby. The result is a swelling or engorgement of the piles.

### What would happen if they were not treated?

It is very important that any sign of rectal bleeding is always reported to your doctor. The doctor or nurse practitioner can then confirm that the bleeding is due to haemorrhoids and not from any other problem in the bowel.

If the haemorrhoids remain untreated and the bleeding continues you may become anaemic from the blood loss. In general, the longer they are left the less likely they are to respond to simple treatments.

Large haemorrhoids can drop down outside the back passage and then clot (thrombose) and become painful. Haemorrhoids that drop down can also produce a leakage of mucus from the back passage. This may cause irritation and inflammation of the skin around the back passage.

**Do not assume that bleeding from the back passage is due to haemorrhoids until you have discussed it with your doctor.**

## How is banding of haemorrhoids performed?

Banding of haemorrhoids is done by placing a small elastic band around the neck of the haemorrhoid which stops the blood supply. This causes the haemorrhoid to fall off between five and 10 days later, but you may not notice this.

## Do's and don'ts

The application of the elastic band may cause some pain and discomfort for a few days afterwards. This is not unusual and if you are in any pain you may take a mild pain killer such as paracetamol every 4 to 6 hours as needed. **Do not exceed the recommended dose of 8 tablets in 24 hours.** Avoid aspirin as this may increase the risk of bleeding.

Constipation and straining should be avoided by keeping the stool soft. This can be done by increasing fruit and fibre in your diet and making sure you drink enough water.

Continue to take any laxatives that you may have been prescribed but do not use strong laxatives, enemas and suppositories. Aim to keep your bowel motion soft and avoid straining.

## What other symptoms may I have during and after treatment?

At first you may have a feeling of wanting to have your bowels open. Do not be worried by this, it is quite normal and will settle eventually. There is no harm done if you do have your bowels open at this time. You may feel light headed after the treatment. Don't worry as it will settle.

It is common to have some bleeding in the first 48 hours following the treatment and then again five to 10 days later when the haemorrhoid falls off.

## What happens when I go home?

You will not need any sedation for this procedure.

- There will be a certain amount of discomfort after the treatment and when you first open your bowels. The discomfort will eventually ease over a period of two to three days or up to a couple of weeks.
- You may experience some urgency before having your bowels open. This will eventually settle down.
- Do not be alarmed if some bands become loose after a few hours. This can happen, but it does not mean that the treatment did not work. However, most people do not notice the elastic bands falling off.
- Delayed bleeding may happen 5 to 14 days after the treatment. This happens when the elastic bands and the haemorrhoids separate. This bleeding is usually temporary and does not last for long. If it continues and you are worried, please contact your GP for advice.
- The local irritation and discomfort can be relieved by having two baths a day. You should not put salt in the bath water as this can make the skin dry and cause irritation. Do not use creams and ointments.

- Opening your bowels may cause some discomfort. However, it is important to have regular bowel action. The bowel motion should be well formed but soft. To achieve this, it is important to increase the amount of fibre in your diet. The simplest way of doing this is by eating breakfast cereals with natural bran added.

### **In the unlikely event that you:**

- feel unusually feverish
- have loss of large amounts of blood or clots
- have difficulty passing urine
- experience swelling of the anus (back passage).

Between the hours of 8.30am and 5pm, contact the Surgical Day Case Unit at The Christie on 0161 918 7292.

Outside these hours (after 5pm and before 8.30am) please contact Ward 10 at The Christie on 0161 446 3860.

### **If you have any questions or concerns - please contact:**

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