

# Hemorrhoids

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Hemorrhoids are swollen and inflamed veins around the anus or in the lower rectum. Hemorrhoids are not dangerous or life threatening, and symptoms usually go away within a few days.

Contributing factors related to hemorrhoids include:

- straining to have a bowel movement
- constipation
- sitting for long periods of time
- frequent diarrhea
- poor diet
- inflammation

The most common symptoms of hemorrhoids are:

- Painless bleeding during bowel movements
- Rectal pain
- Rectal itching
- Swelling around the rectum
- A painful lump at the rectum

Relieving the Pain:

- Clean the rectal area with moist toilet paper or moistened pads such as Tucks Pads or Baby Wipes.
- Use ice packs to relieve swelling
- Tylenol or Advil can help with pain and swelling
- Over the counter creams, suggested by your medical practitioner, can also help with pain and swelling.

Preventing Constipation:

- Increase fiber – fresh fruits, leafy vegetables, and whole-grain breads and cereals
- Drink plenty of fluids (except caffeine and alcohol).
- Exercise regularly
- Use bulk forming laxatives such as Fiberall, Metamucil. Avoid other laxatives that can potentially lead to diarrhea and worsen symptoms
- Don't ignore the urge to use the bathroom

Sources and/or additional resources:

Web MD: <http://www.webmd.com/digestive-disorders/tc/hemorrhoids-topic-overview>

Family Doctor.org: <http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/diseases-conditions/hemorrhoids.html>

Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hemorrhoids/basics/definition/con-20029852>

National Institutes of Health: <http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/hemorrhoids/index.aspx#what>

If you are a registered Millersville University student and you have questions or you need to make an appointment, please call Millersville University Health Services at 871-5250.