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Anal Fissure

An anal fissure is a split or a tear in the lining of the anal canal (right at the opening of the rectum). It can be very painful or just cause minor discomfort and bleeding.

Most fissures are related to constipation. Either the stool is “too hard” or the opening is “too small” or a combination of both. The tear occurs after each bowel movement and can become a chronic ulcer called a fissure. Diarrhea can also make a fissure much worse.

A fissure is usually identified by severe stabbing pain associated with a bowel movement and lasting for 30-60 minutes after. Bright red bleeding, swelling and itching can also be present.

Most fissures respond to medical therapy of the constipation. A high fiber diet with increased liquid intake and a daily fiber supplement like Metamucil™, Hydrocil™, Benefiber™ etc., are the key to the initial therapy and maintenance. Take one tablespoon mixed in a glass of water every morning. We recommend powders over pills forms. Avoid over-the-counter creams because they can make the condition worse.

Consult your doctor for a check up to confirm the diagnosis, because other more severe conditions can present with similar symptoms. Some fissures require other more specific medical therapies and some patients may even need surgery. Screening for other conditions is also very important.

Prevention is the best form of therapy.

Even though these conditions are minor, they are best treated by a Board Certified Colon and Rectal Surgeon, an expert in this field. Please go to our website www.drisaac.net for more information. Look for patient education and instructions.