

Anorectal Abscess and Anal Fistula

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Anorectal abscess and anal fistula are conditions that often occur together. An anal fistula is an abnormal tunnel from the anus or rectum to the skin or another organ. It usually forms when there is an anorectal abscess. An anorectal abscess is a collection of pus from an infection in the anus or rectum.

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS:

Medicines:

- **Antibiotics:** This medicine will help fight or prevent an infection. Take your antibiotics until they are gone, even if you feel better.
- **Pain medicine:** You may be given medicine to take away or decrease pain. Do not wait until the pain is severe before you take your medicine.
- **Stool softeners:** This medicine makes it easier for you to have a bowel movement. You may need this medicine to treat or prevent constipation.
- **Take your medicine as directed.** Contact your healthcare provider if you think your medicine is not helping or if you have side effects. Tell him or her if you are allergic to any medicine. Keep a list of the medicines, vitamins, and herbs you take. Include the amounts, and when and why you take them. Bring the list or the pill bottles to follow-up visits. Carry your medicine list with you in case of an emergency.

Follow up with your healthcare provider as directed: Your healthcare provider will need to make sure that your anorectal abscess or anal fistula heals. Write down your questions so you remember to ask them during your visits.

Sitz bath: You may need to soak in a warm tub or take a sitz bath. A sitz bath may decrease your pain and relax your anal muscle. You may need to do this more than once a day. Ask your healthcare provider for information on how to use a sitz bath and how often you should use it.

Prevent constipation: High-fiber foods, extra liquids, and regular exercise can help you prevent constipation. Examples of high-fiber foods are fruit and bran. Prune juice and water are good liquids to drink. Regular exercise helps your digestive system work. You may also be told to take over-the-counter fiber and stool softener medicines. Take these items as directed.

Contact your healthcare provider if:

- You have a fever.
- You have increased pain, redness, swelling, drainage, or bleeding in the area.
- You have questions about your condition or care.

Return to the emergency department if:

- You have blood, pus, or a bad smelling discharge coming from your anus or vagina.
- You have a very bad pain in your rectum or vagina that does not go away.
- You have trouble breathing all of a sudden.
- Your bowel movements are black or have blood on them.

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