Haemorrhoids
Haemorrhoids, or piles, are varicose veins of the rectum or anus.

Both prevention and treatment rely on changing your diet to include plenty of fruits, vegetables, cereals and water.

### Types of haemorrhoids

The three different types of haemorrhoids include:

- **Internal haemorrhoids** – found inside the rectum. They are painless but tend to bleed.
- **Prolapsed haemorrhoids** – a more severe and painful form of internal haemorrhoids. These veins push through the anus and hang out of the body, particularly after going to the toilet. Sometimes, the anal sphincter (ring of muscle) can strangulate veins that hang out permanently.
- **External haemorrhoids** – are like small haemorrhages (blesdes) under the skin around the anus. They feel like hard lumps.

### Symptoms of haemorrhoids

Bleeding is the most common symptom of haemorrhoids. Most people with internal haemorrhoids notice a smear of bright red blood on the toilet paper, or perhaps streaks of blood in the faeces. It is important to see a doctor, because bleeding from the bowel can be caused by other conditions too (some of them serious), including bowel cancer.

### Causes of haemorrhoids

Haemorrhoids develop slowly over time. Small blood vessels and veins in and around the rectum and anus carry deoxygenated blood back to the heart. If this return blood flow is hindered, then these tiny blood vessels and veins can distend with blood and eventually grow fat and knobbly.

The main causes of haemorrhoids include:

- straining on the toilet because of constipation
- pregnancy, because of the extra weight and pressure on the bowels
- hereditary factors
- heavy manual labour.

Sitting on hard surfaces for long stretches of time can also contribute to the development of haemorrhoids.

### Prevention and treatment for haemorrhoids

Both treating and preventing haemorrhoids rely on eliminating constipation. A diet high in vegetables, fruits, cereals and water will help produce soft bowel motions that are passed easily and regularly.

Apart from improvements to your daily diet, there are a number of other treatments for haemorrhoids, including:

- astringent ointments or suppositories to shrivel the haemorrhoids
- band ligation of haemorrhoids - small bands are placed via a proctoscope to reduce the haemorrhoids
- surgery as a last resort.

### Where to get help

- Your doctor

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More information

Digestive system

The following content is displayed as Tabs. Once you have activated a link navigate to the end of the list to view its associated content. The activated link is defined as Active Tab

- Digestive system explained
Digestive system explained

- **Barium tests**
  Barium tests are used to examine conditions of the digestive tract such as reflux, narrowing or ulceration.

- **Digestive system explained**
  The digestive tract can be thought of as a long muscular tube with digestive organs attached along the way.

- **Fibre in food**
  A diet high in fibre keeps the digestive system healthy.

**Oesophagus**

- **Barrett's oesophagus**
  Symptoms of Barrett's oesophagus are similar to regular heartburn, which means many people don't seek treatment until their condition is quite advanced.

- **Digestive tract birth defects**
  Too much amniotic fluid surrounding the baby during pregnancy (polyhydramnios) may indicate the presence of defects of the digestive tract.

- **Hiccups**
  Hiccups that last for days, weeks or even years may be symptomatic of underlying disease.

- **Indigestion**
  Food inside the stomach is only kept there by the force of gravity so to avoid heartburn, don't lie down after a big meal.

- **Throat cancer**
  Risk factors for throat cancer include smoking and heavy alcohol consumption.

**Stomach**

- **Abdominal pain in children**
  Children may feel stomach pain for a range of reasons and may need treatment.

- **Gastritis**
  Gastritis may be caused by many factors including infection, alcohol, particular medications and some allergic and immune conditions.

- **Hernias**
  Both reducible and non-reducible hernias need to be surgically repaired - this is a common operation.

- **Peritonitis**
  Peritonitis is a life-threatening emergency that needs prompt medical treatment.

- **Stomach cancer**
  The symptoms of stomach cancer are usually vague and can be common to other medical conditions.

- **Stomach ulcer**
  Most stomach ulcers are caused by infection or medication, not stress or poor diet.

**Small intestine**

- **Coeliac disease and gluten sensitivity**
  Coeliac disease is an immune disease caused by gluten.

- **Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis**
  When people with inflammatory bowel disease are not experiencing a flare-up of their illness, they feel quite well and are often free of symptoms.
• Gastroenteritis
   It is important to establish the cause of gastro, as different types of gastroenteritis respond to different treatments...

• Gastroenteritis - amoebiasis
   Amoebiasis can cause diarrhoea among travellers to developing countries...

• Gastroenteritis - campylobacteriosis
   Campylobacteriosis is a type of gastroenteritis and is more common in children under five years of age and young adults...

• Gastroenteritis - cryptosporidiosis
   Outbreaks of cryptosporidiosis have been associated with child care centres, public swimming pools and contaminated water supplies...

• Gastroenteritis - giardiasis
   Most people infected with Giardia parasites do not develop symptoms but can still spread the infection to others...

• Gastroenteritis in children
   Gastroenteritis or Gastro can be dangerous for very young babies. Gastro is common in young children and spreads easily. Gastro is a bowel infection which causes diarrhoea (runny or watery poo) and...

• Gastroenteritis - salmonellosis
   You may be more prone to salmonellosis if you are elderly, have another medical condition (such as a weakened immune system) or are malnourished...

• Gastroenteritis - shigellosis
   Outbreaks of shigellosis gastroenteritis can occur in institutional settings, particularly where children are still in nappies or adults are incontinent...

• Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
   Irritable bowel syndrome can't be cured with medications or special diets but avoiding individual triggers can help prevent it...

• Pets – safe handling of reptiles and tropical fish
   People in contact with tropical fish and reptiles such as turtles, lizards and snakes may be at risk of infections and illness due to germs (such as bacteria, viruses and parasites) carried on the...

• Rotavirus
   Rotavirus is a common cause of viral gastroenteritis for Australian babies and preschool children...

• Traveller's diarrhoea
   The risk of traveller's diarrhoea is higher where sanitation and hygiene standards are poor...

Large intestine

• Appendicitis
   Anyone of any age can be struck by appendicitis, but it seems to be more common during childhood and adolescence...

• Botulism
   Botulism is considered a medical emergency. If untreated, it may cause death...

• Bowel cancer
   Bowel cancer is highly curable if found at an early stage...

• Bowel motions
   Many illnesses and events can affect the colour and texture of faeces...

• Collagenous colitis and lymphocytic colitis
   Collagenous colitis and lymphocytic colitis are types of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)...

• Constipation
   Most cases of constipation are treated by eating a diet high in fibre, drinking more fluids, and exercising daily...

• Constipation and children
   A healthy diet, plenty of fluids, exercise and regular toilet habits can help relieve constipation in children...

• Diarrhoea
Acute diarrhoea in babies and young children can be life threatening...

- **Diverticulosis and diverticulitis**
  Diverticulosis and diverticulitis relate to the formation or infection of abnormal pouches in the bowel wall...

- **Flatulence**
  Foods that tend to trigger flatulence also contain essential nutrients and shouldn’t be eliminated...

- **Incontinence and continence problems**
  Many things can be done to manage, treat and sometimes cure incontinence and continence problems...

- **Incontinence - prevention tips**
  Incontinence can be prevented in most cases...

- **Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)**
  Irritable bowel syndrome can’t be cured with medications or special diets but avoiding individual triggers can help prevent it...

- **Pinworms**
  Despite the unsavoury reputation, a pinworm infection (worms) is relatively harmless and easily treated...

- **Polyps**
  Nasal polyps can sometimes interfere with breathing...

- **Short bowel syndrome**
  A person with short bowel syndrome is likely to be deficient in a range of important nutrients...

- **Slow transit constipation**
  A newborn with slow transit constipation may not pass meconium until 24 hours or more after being born...

- **Stoma after ileostomy or colostomy**
  A stoma is an artificially created hole (stoma) in the abdomen so that faeces can still leave the body...

- **Tapeworms and hydatid disease**
  It’s important for your own health to control tapeworm infection in your dog...

**Rectum**

- **Anal fissure**
  Around half of cases of anal fissures heal by themselves with proper self-care and avoidance of constipation...

- **Haemorrhoids**
  A diet high in fibre can both treat and prevent haemorrhoids...

- **Rectal cancer**
  If treated in its earliest stages, rectal cancer is highly curable...

- **Rectal prolapse**
  Rectal prolapse occurs when the rectum turns itself inside out and comes out through the anus...

- **Rectocele**
  A rectocele is when the rectum protrudes into the vagina...

**Liver and gallbladder**

- **Cirrhosis of the liver**
  Cirrhosis is a type of liver damage where healthy cells are replaced by scar tissue...

- **Gallbladder - gallstones and surgery**
  Medical treatment for gallstones may not be necessary unless the gallstones cause symptoms...

- **Gilbert's syndrome**
  Gilbert's syndrome and hepatitis both cause jaundice but are not related...
Hepatitis
Hepatitis is an umbrella term for several diseases that affect the liver.

Hepatitis A
Immunisation is the best protection against hepatitis A infection and it is recommended for people in high-risk groups.

Hepatitis B
Hepatitis B is a viral infection that affects the liver and can lead to serious illness or death.

Hepatitis B – immunisation
Immunisation against hepatitis B reduces the risk of infection in babies.

Hepatitis C
In Australia, hepatitis C is most often spread through the sharing of unsterile drug injecting equipment. New all oral combination treatment has greatly improved health outcomes for people with.

Hepatitis C Cure - what it means for Victorians (video)
Hepatitis C Cure - what it means for Victorians.

Jaundice in babies
If your baby is full-term and healthy, mild jaundice is nothing to worry about and will resolve by itself within a week or so.

Liver
Some forms of liver disease are inherited, while others are caused by lifestyle factors.

Liver cancer
Liver cancer can be a primary cancer that starts in the liver, or a secondary cancer that starts in another part of the body and spreads to the liver.

Liver – fatty liver disease
The damage caused by fatty liver disease can often be halted or reversed through simple lifestyle changes.

New drugs for the treatment of hepatitis C – Frequently Asked Questions for patients
In Australia, hepatitis C is most often spread through the sharing of unsterile drug injecting equipment. New all oral combination treatment has greatly improved health outcomes for people with.

Primary biliary cirrhosis
Primary biliary cirrhosis is an autoimmune condition characterised by inflammation and scarring of the bile ducts within the liver.

Pancreas

Diabetes
Diabetes and the build-up of glucose (sugar) in the blood can cause serious complications if left untreated.

Diabetes type 1
Type 1 diabetes can affect anyone of any age, but is more common in people under 30 years.

Diabetes type 2
Type 2 diabetes may be prevented, but it cannot be cured.

Pancreas
The pancreas helps to digest food, particularly protein.

Pancreatic cancer
The causes of pancreatic cancer are unknown, but smokers are at greater risk.

Pancreatitis
Pancreatitis is inflammation of the pancreas, which can be either acute or chronic.

Related Information

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**Related information on other websites**

- [Colorectal Surgical Society of Australasia](#)

**Content Partner**

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