



FAQs on
DIVERTICULITIS

WHAT IS DIVERTICULOSIS/DIVERTICULITIS?

Diverticula are pockets that develop in the colonic wall, usually in the sigmoid or left colon, but may involve the entire colon. Diverticulosis describes the presence of these pockets. Diverticulitis is inflammation of these pockets. There can be other complications of these pockets such as bleeding and perforation.

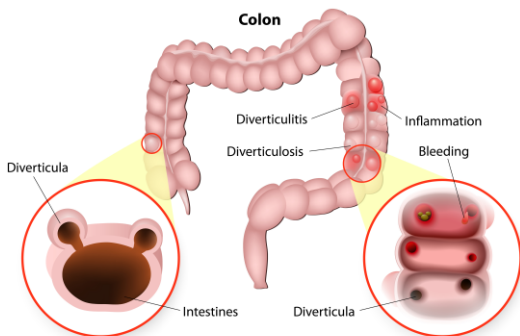
SYMPTOMS OF DIVERTICULAR DISEASE

Uncomplicated Diverticular disease is usually not associated with symptoms. Symptoms are related to complications of the disease including diverticulitis and significant bleeding from the colon.

An infection of the diverticula may cause one or more of the following symptoms:

- Pain in the abdomen
- Chills
- Fever and change in Bowel habits.
- More intense symptoms with serious complications:
 - Perforation (rupture)
 - Abscess or fistula formation (abnormal connections between colon to colon, small bowel, urinary bladder, female genital tract or the skin.)

DIVERTICULOSIS and DIVERTICULITIS



WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF DIVERTICULAR DISEASE?

Diverticulosis is a stage of evolution in one's aging. However both Diverticulosis and diverticulitis are more commonly seen in people with a low fibre diet and reduced bowel movements. It is thought that the above over the years creates increased colonic pressure and results in pockets or diverticula.

HOW IS DIVERTICULAR DISEASE TREATED?

- Increasing the amount of dietary fibre (grains, vegetables, etc)
- Restricting certain foods reduce the pressure in the colon.

Diverticulitis requires different management:

- Oral antibiotics
- Dietary restrictions
- Possibly stool softeners.

Acute cases require hospitalization with intravenous antibiotics and dietary restraints.

NEED FOR SURGERY

Surgery is reserved for patients with recurrent episodes of diverticulitis, complications or severe attacks when there's little or no response to medications. Surgery may also be required in individuals with a single episode of severe bleeding from diverticulosis or with recurrent episodes of bleeding. Surgical treatment for diverticulitis removes the diseased part of the colon usually the left or sigmoid colon.

Complete recovery can be expected. Normal discharge function usually resumes in about 4-6 weeks.

Emergency surgery is warranted when there is a perforation and peritonitis (life threatening). When such is the case, patients may require a temporary colostomy bag.

Patients are encouraged to seek medical attention for abdominal symptoms early to help avoid complications

WHO IS A COLON AND RECTAL SURGEON?

Colon and rectal surgeons are experts in the surgical and nonsurgical treatment of colon and rectal problems. They have completed advanced training in the treatment of colon and rectal problems in addition to full training in general surgery. Colon and rectal surgeons treat benign and malignant conditions, perform routine screening examinations and surgically treat problems when necessary.

CONSULTING COLORECTAL SURGEON

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