

Fast Facts About Hemorrhoids

- Hemorrhoids are swollen veins. Each of us has veins around the anus that tend to stretch under pressure, somewhat like varicose veins in the legs. When these veins swell, they are called hemorrhoids.
- Constipation is the main cause of hemorrhoids.
- Symptoms of hemorrhoids include aching after a bowel movement; anal or rectal itching; bright red blood on toilet tissue or in toilet bowl; appearance of anal tissue pads or sensitive lumps.
- There are four degrees of hemorrhoids — and options for treatment for each degree:
 - 1st degree: No prolapse (hemorrhoids do not protrude outside the anus).
 - 2nd degree: Prolapse occurs during bowel movement and spontaneously returns when straining ceases.
 - 3rd degree: Prolapse is manually reducible.
 - 4th degree: Prolapse is irreducible.
- According to the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons (ASCRS):
 - Hemorrhoids are one of the most common ailments known in both men and women.
 - More than half the population will develop hemorrhoids, usually after age 30.
- Millions of Americans currently suffer from hemorrhoids, but most do not seek treatment beyond over-the-counter remedies. The average person suffers in silence for a long period before seeking medical care.
- More than 525,000 patients are treated annually for symptomatic hemorrhoids. Of these, approximately 10–20 percent will require surgical treatment of the condition.
- According to the National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse, about half of the U.S. population will have hemorrhoids by age 50.
- Often lifestyle changes, topical medications, and good hygiene are all that is needed to reduce the symptoms of hemorrhoids. Most painful hemorrhoids stop hurting on their own in one to two weeks. However, in a certain percentage of cases, surgical procedures are necessary to provide satisfactory, long-term relief.
- The Procedure for Prolapse and Hemorrhoids (PPH) is a new, less painful procedure for advanced hemorrhoids (second to fourth degree). With the PPH procedure, patients experience less pain, and recover faster than patients who undergo the conventional hemorrhoidectomy procedure.
- The PPH procedure was first introduced in the United States in October 2001.