Tan Tock Seng HOSPITAL

PHARMACY
Drug Information

Medications to Treat Haemorrhoids

What are Haemorrhoids?

- Haemorrhoids, commonly known as piles, are swollen veins found inside or around the bottom (the rectum and anus). These swollen veins increase in size when one exerts excessive straining or pressure, usually during bowel movement. Haemorrhoids are usually not dangerous nor do they lead to cancer.
- Haemorrhoids only require treatment when they cause symptoms.
- There are two types of haemorrhoids:

1. Internal Haemorrhoids

   These are swollen veins inside your rectum. They cannot be seen or felt from outside the anus. Sometimes, an internal haemorrhoid may stretch down until it bulges outside your anus. This is called a prolapsed haemorrhoid.

2. External Haemorrhoids

   External haemorrhoids are swollen veins outside the anus. It is felt as a small lump on the edge of the anus.

What are the Causes of Haemorrhoids?

- Constipation, passing large stools and straining at the toilet.
- Pregnancy due to downward pressure of the baby and hormonal effects on the veins.
- Elderly and overweight individuals are also more likely to have haemorrhoids.

Common Symptoms and Signs of Haemorrhoids

- Pain: This usually results from a prolapsed haemorrhoid.
- Bleeding: small amount of bright red blood on your toilet tissue or in the toilet bowl.
- Anal itching (very rare).

Haemorrhoids do not cause constipation or change in bowel habits.

What are the Medications Used to Treat Haemorrhoids?

Medication Class	Medication Name	Benefits of Medication
Oral Preparations	Diosmin & Hesperidin	• These medications help to stabilise the walls of the blood vessels, making them less susceptible to injury.
	Lactulose Syrup	• This is a laxative that softens stools thereby reducing any strain/pain on bowel movement.
	Senna, Bisacodyl	• These medications are also laxatives that help stimulate bowel movement to prevent constipation.
	Ispaghula Husk (Fybogel)	• This is a type of fibre supplement to help maintain regular bowel movement. • All fibre supplements should be taken with plenty of water/fluids to avoid making the constipation worse.
Topical Preparations	Proctosedyl suppository/ ointment	• This preparation helps to reduce swelling, pain and inflammation of haemorrhoids.
	Lidocaine Jelly	• This is a local anaesthetic to be applied to the anal skin that helps to numb the pain.
	Creams and Ointments (Anusol, Preparation H)	• These medications are able to decrease the discomfort caused by pain and itching. However, they do not cure the haemorrhoids. • These medications also help to lubricate the anal canal.

Instructions for Applying Topical Medications

1. Wash your hands before application.
2. Clean the affected area with mild soap and warm water and rinse thoroughly.
3. Gently pat the affected area dry.
4. Apply externally to the affected area. Do not apply directly to an open wound.

How are the Medications Administered / Taken?

- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, take only the usual dose. Never take a double dosage to make up for the missed dose.

Can the Medications Be Administered / Taken With Other Medications?

- It is important that you inform the doctor, pharmacist about other medications – including over-the-counter medications, supplements and traditional/herbal remedies – that you are currently taking, as they may affect the way you benefit from the medications that treat haemorrhoids.

What are the Important Side Effects?

- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition even though they may result in some inevitable side effects.

Side Effect	Medication Name	Management
Diarrhoea and gas	Lactulose Syrup	Symptoms are reversible upon discontinuing the medication.
Diarrhoea and stomach cramping	Senna, Bisacodyl	

If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- Consult your health care provider if haemorrhoid symptoms do not improve with treatment or if you feel dizzy, faint and lightheaded. These may indicate a more severe underlying disease.

What Else can I do to Help My Condition?

- The best way to prevent haemorrhoids is to keep stools soft, so that they can be passed out with ease, and hence decreasing pressure and straining. This can be done by :

1. Eating high fibre foods such as fruits, green leafy vegetable, cereals and wholemeal bread.
2. Drinking 10-12 glasses of water/fluids per day.
3. Exercising regularly.
4. Avoid sitting or standing for long periods.
5. Heeding the natural urge to have bowel movement. If you wait to pass a bowel movement and the urge goes away, your stool could become dry and harder to pass.
6. Keep the anal area clean and avoid vigorous rubbing of the area.

How do I Store These Medications?

- Other than Proctosedyl suppository, store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.
- Store Proctosedyl suppository in a refrigerator between 2 – 8°C. Do not freeze.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

Tan Tock Seng HOSPITAL
National Healthcare Group

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