

## **Hemorrhoids**

Hemorrhoids are swollen veins in or near the rectum. There are internal and external hemorrhoids. Internal hemorrhoids may cause symptoms but may not be felt or seen outside of the rectum. External hemorrhoids can be seen and felt externally.

### **Signs and symptoms that are commonly experienced may include:**

- Presence of a bulge
- Pain near the rectum
- Bleeding (often seen in the toilet or when wiping)

### **Risk Factors**

- Straining during bowel movements
- Low fiber diet
- Being pregnant and giving birth
- Anal intercourse
- Heavy lifting

### **Diagnosis**

Hemorrhoids are diagnosed by visual and physical exam. Because a patient may have external and/or internal hemorrhoids the provider will likely do a digital rectal exam. They will insert a lubricated finger into the rectum to detect abnormalities. The provider may also perform evaluations such as a sigmoidoscopy; this allows them to insert a camera through the rectum for visualization of the anatomy.

### **Treatment**

Seek medical attention if you suspect that you have hemorrhoids. They are best treated with early diagnosis.

- Eat a healthy diet with high fiber
- Soak in a sitz bath
- Topical ointments
- Pain relievers
- Surgery. Surgery can include banding, removal of the hemorrhoids, or removal of a blood clot that can form within a thrombosed hemorrhoid.