

If you experience severe abdominal pain or if you pass more than an egg-cup full of fresh red blood, please seek help immediately;

Between 0800-1800 contact your **GP** or local **A&E dept.**

Between 1800 - 0800 contact **Raigmore Hospital** on 01463 704000 and ask to speak to the General Surgical Registrar

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Banding of Haemorrhoids

What are Haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids or piles, as they are more commonly known, are swollen tissue, richly supplied with blood vessels, which lie in the wall of the anal canal (back passage) or just outside it. Haemorrhoids are normal, they function to keep us continent and it is only when they start to come down (prolapse) that they cause problems. Haemorrhoids can cause bouts of anal discomfort, rectal bleeding or irritation of the surrounding skin.

What causes Haemorrhoids?

It is believed that haemorrhoids are often associated with constipation, particularly when frequent straining to pass stools is involved. This can arise from a lack of fibre and insufficient fluids in the diet. The result is that the stool becomes hard, dry and difficult to pass without straining.

During straining the blood vessels in the back passage become enlarged and swollen, leading to the formation of piles.

Haemorrhoids can also be ironically exacerbated by diarrhoea. It is a common problem amongst healthy people, however the risk of piles can also increase in certain medical conditions.

How are Haemorrhoids removed?

Small bands similar to elastic bands are placed on the lining of the bowel above

the haemorrhoid. This reduces the blood supply to the area causing the haemorrhoid to shrink in size. The tissue within each band shrivels and falls off between 7 and 10 days following the procedure itself. Once the tissue sloughs, the slow healing that occurs causes scarring and prevents the haemorrhoid from prolapsing. Occasionally the treatment may not be sufficient, and further banding or even surgery may subsequently be required, but this is not common.

Is the procedure painful?

Most people do not find the procedure or recovery painful. You may however experience some discomfort. Initially this is usually relieved by the passage of wind or flatus. Please do not worry, as this is a normal side effect of the procedure. You may experience a feeling of heaviness, similar to the need to pass a bowel movement. This is very common, is caused by the presence of the bands and usually settles within an hour or so. Occasionally some light bleeding is noticed at this time.

Can I go to the toilet after the procedure?

Yes, you should always go to the toilet when you feel that you need to pass a bowel movement. You may notice small flecks of blood after you have passed a

bowel movement. This is quite normal after the procedure. However, if you notice large amounts of blood or are experiencing difficulty passing a bowel movement, please contact your GP. If you feel the urge to go to the toilet, try to relax. If you go and nothing happens, then don't strain and simply leave the toilet.

When will I be able to go home after the procedure?

You can return home when you feel ready. However, you should take care to avoid strenuous activity for the remainder of the day.

What foods should I eat after the procedure?

A diet containing foods high in fibre with plenty of fluids to prevent constipation. You should eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Regular exercise will also help prevent constipation.

Will it cause any damage to the bands if I bathe or shower?

It will not cause any damage to the bands if you bathe or shower. In fact, it is good to keep the area clean. The area around the anal opening should be cleansed with mild unscented soap and warm water.