



Self-care Information

Haemorrhoids (Piles)

Tips on how you can manage haemorrhoid symptoms

“Supporting you to look after you”

Key Points:

- Symptoms include bright red blood after you poo, an itchy bottom and lumps and pain around your bottom.
- These usually settle down after a few days without needing treatment.
- Take paracetamol if the piles hurt.
- Use an ice pack wrapped in a towel to ease discomfort.
- To prevent piles drink lots of water and eat plenty of fibre to keep your poo soft.

What are haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids, also known as piles, are swellings containing large blood vessels found inside or around the bottom (rectum and anus). They are caused by an increase in pressure in the blood vessels in and around your anus.

They often don't cause any symptoms and will get better on their own after a few days. If you do get symptoms, they may include:

- Bleeding bright red blood after you poo.
- Itchy bottom.
- A lump hanging down outside your anus which may need to be pushed back in after you poo.
- A mucus discharge on your underwear or toilet paper after you poo.
- Soreness, redness and swelling around your anus.



Haemorrhoids aren't usually painful, but you may wish to seek advice from your community pharmacist.

They will have a private room where they can give confidential advice.

To treat haemorrhoids, you can:

- Buy a cream or wipes from your local pharmacy which can soothe pain and itching.
- Use a small ice pack on the affected area several times a day to help with the pain and swelling.
- Consider pain relief like paracetamol.
- DO NOT take Ibuprofen if your piles are bleeding.
- Wear cotton, loose underwear to stop moisture building up.



To prevent haemorrhoids forming:

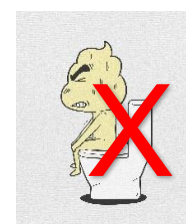
Try to...

- ✓ Eat more fibre from fruit, vegetables, wholegrain rice, wholewheat pasta and bread, pulses and beans, seeds, nuts, and oats.
- ✓ Drink a lot of water and cut down on caffeine and alcohol.
- ✓ Use water and an emollient (moisturising) soap to clean the skin around your anus - no more than once a day.
- ✓ Lose weight if you are overweight.
- ✓ Exercise regularly to prevent constipation and reduce your blood pressure.



Try not to...

- ✗ Strain too much on the toilet if you are constipated.
- ✗ Delay going to the toilet.
- ✗ Take medicines that cause constipation (speak to your pharmacist for more advice on this).



When to seek advice from your GP

- If you have symptoms of piles and they're getting worse or there's no improvement after 7 days of treatment at home.
- If you keep getting piles.
- If you notice a change around your anus that is not normal for you.
- You have pus leaking from your piles.

Here are some links to further information:

Look at the NHS Website: [Piles \(haemorrhoids\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/piles/)

For a Patient Website: [Piles \(Haemorrhoids\): Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment \(patient.info\)](https://patient.info/conditions/piles/)

For more advice visit your local pharmacy

