

Anal Fissure

Definition

- An anal fissure is a shallow tear in the skin around the anus
- This is the cause in over 90% of children with blood in the stools

Health Information

Symptoms

- It causes blood on the surface of a stool.
- Blood may also be found on toilet tissue after wiping.
- The blood is always bright red.
- Only a few streaks or flecks are seen.
- You may see a shallow tear at 6 or 12 o'clock on the anus.

Cause

- Anal fissures usually are caused by passage of a large or hard stool.
- Wiping dried stool off the anus can also cause a fissure.

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- An anal fissure is the most common cause of blood in the stools.
- It is caused by passing a hard or large stool.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Warm Saline Baths:

- Give a warm salt water bath for 20 minutes.
- Add 2 ounces (60 ml) of table salt to a tub of warm water. You can also use baking soda.
- Do 2 times per day for 1 day to cleanse the area and to help healing.
- Don't use any soap in the water or on the anus.

3. Steroid Ointment:

- If the anus seems red, use 1% hydrocortisone ointment. No prescription is needed.
- Put a little around the anus.
- Use 2 times per day for 1 day to help healing.
- Could also use petroleum jelly to protect the anus while it heals.

4. High-Fiber Diet:

- For children more than 1 year old, change the diet.
- Increase fruits, vegetables and grains (fiber).
- Reduce milk products to 3 servings per day.
- Treat constipation if that is the cause.

5. Prevention of Anal Fissures:

- Keep the stools soft and release them daily
- Cleanse the anus gently with warm water after passing stools.

6. **What to Expect:**

- Bleeding from a fissure will stop on its own in a few minutes.
- Most often, anal tears heal up quickly in 1 or 2 days.

Call Your Doctor If

- Bleeding gets worse
- Small bleeding occurs more than 2 times
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

Author: Barton Schmitt MD, FAAP

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