



CENTER OF SURGICAL EXCELLENCE

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NEW HEMORRHOID TREATMENT INFRARED COAGULATION (IRC)

Hemorrhoids are rarely symptoms of a life threatening medical condition, but they can certainly make sufferers' lives seem unbearable due to symptoms such as pain, itching, swelling, bleeding and protrusions.

A symptomatic hemorrhoid is one of the most common complaints I see as a physician. The problem does not discriminate: it can occur not only in men and women alike, but also at any age. Often, hemorrhoids enlarge and become increasingly bothersome, as sufferers get older. Reports estimate that at least 50% of individuals over the age of 50 have some form of symptomatic hemorrhoids.

Many patients attempt to treat hemorrhoids on their own; studies estimate an expenditure of over a \$100 million a year on over-the-counter medications. Sufferers are sometimes able to control their problem by increasing the fiber content of their diets, maintaining normal weight and avoiding straining during bowel movements.

Patients who have hemorrhoids that don't respond to self-care measures should consult a physician. Not all rectal growths are hemorrhoids, and though rectal bleeding is not necessarily a sign of colon cancer, it should be evaluated to rule out the possibility. A thorough examination and proper diagnosis by a physician is considered essential if bleeding from the rectum, or blood in the stool, lasts more than a day or two.

Diagnosis for hemorrhoids is accomplished by an examination of the anus and rectum to look for swollen blood vessels. Physicians will typically also perform a digital exam to feel for any abnormalities inside the rectum. More thorough evaluation of the rectum for hemorrhoids may require an examination by anoscope, a hollow, lighted tube used to view internal hemorrhoids, or a proctoscope, used to more completely examine the internal rectal area. Ruling out other causes of gastrointestinal bleeding may require

examination of the rectum and lower colon with sigmoidoscopy of the entire colon with colonoscopy. These procedures are diagnostic in nature, and each also involves the insertion of a flexible lighted tube into the rectum.

Hemorrhoids may be a sensitive subject for most people, but it no longer has to be a painful one. Several new techniques can be performed on an outpatient basis that will cure the condition quickly, safely, painlessly, and with little or no downtime.

OPTIONS

“Hemorrhoids, also known as “piles”, are masses of dilated veins in the anus or in the mucous membrane of the rectum”. “Among factors contributing to this condition are hereditary, nutrition, occupations, pregnancy, exercise, coughing and constipation. Hemorrhoids are rated in severity by four degrees, and classified as external or internal by their location. The extent of the disorder is what will determine the method of treatment”.

Milder cases of hemorrhoids may require no more than an over-the-counter treatment. However, certain patients have moderately severe or very severe hemorrhoids. In these cases, the internal hemorrhoids may become prolapsed, which means they extrude from the body and bleed profusely.



IN OFFICE CONVENIENCE

Fast gaining popularity is a procedure called, Infrared Coagulation which is an offshoot of laser technology. “With the use of an Infrared Coagulator (IRC), we can zap away hemorrhoids by using a pistol-like probe that emits bursts of infrared light energy lasting between 1.5 and 2 seconds each”. “This pulsed light causes the blood within the knot of the hemorrhoidal tissue to clot. The hemorrhoid then shrivels up and dies. The treatment is virtually pain-free and requires no anesthesia. Some patients report feeling a brief sensation of heat during the treatment. Patients save the expense of hospitalization, and they typically only need two or three short office treatments. The most likely candidates for IRC are those patients who have bleeding internal hemorrhoids or prolapsing internal hemorrhoids.

Infrared Coagulation (IRC)

Is the State of the Art office treatment for hemorrhoids and is preferred over other methods because it is fast, well-tolerated by patients, and virtually problem-free done in the office of Gastroenterology Associates of Venice & Englewood