

WHAT ARE HEMORRHOIDS?

Hemorrhoids are small veins that have become enlarged and swollen (called “varicose”) around the rectum and anus. The rectum is the final or lowest part of the large bowel, and is surrounded by a circle of muscle that stretches and then tightens to force the solid waste products of digestion (feces or bowel movement) down and out through the anus, the small opening through which solid waste passes out of the body. Veins around the rectum and anus often swell and become inflamed, develop small blood clots, and cause minor bleeding. There are two major types of hemorrhoids - external and internal. Many people suffer from both.

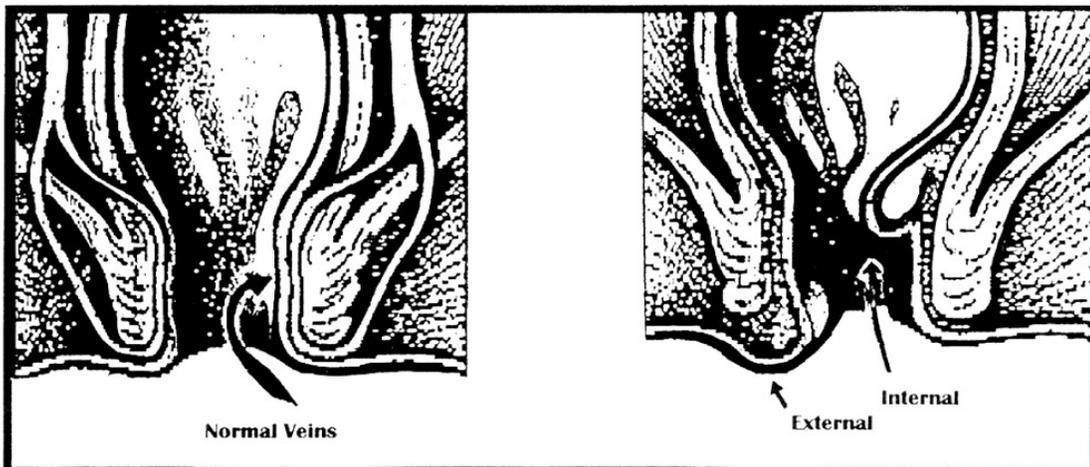
EXTERNAL

External hemorrhoids develop under the skin, just outside the opening of the anus. They may cause pain and itch, especially during a bowel movement, and they are often tender to the touch. They are round, purple, and feel like “soft swellings.”

INTERNAL

Internal hemorrhoids are found further up, inside the rectum. Often these hemorrhoids are not painful, and you may not know they are there until they start to bleed. Sometimes these internal hemorrhoids may be pushed out (prolapsed) through the anus. If that happens, they can become quite painful.

When blood clots develop inside these enlarged veins, whether external or internal, the doctors say they are “thrombosed” or “thrombotic.” Thrombotic hemorrhoids can cause bleeding and pain that gets worse with irritation or increased pressure (coughing or straining, for example).



Rectal Rocket Suppository

Patients who cannot take medications orally are prime candidates for compounded suppositories. Available in various shapes depending on administration, suppositories can be given rectally, vaginally or urethrally. By melting or dissolving into the body cavity, they pass quickly into the bloodstream. They can be used for delayed-release medications, hormone replacement therapy, or to treat local conditions such as nausea, infections, inflammation, or hemorrhoids.

1. The Rectal Rocket was designed for the hemorrhoid patient so that part of the suppository is inserted into the rectum to treat internal hemorrhoids, while the larger flared end of the suppository remains on the outside to treat external hemorrhoids.
2. The suppository should be used when the patient will be able to lie down for at least six hours.
3. The suppository should be at room temperature when placed in the rectum. The suppository should be placed under warm water for a few seconds before insertion.
4. The diagram below identifies the proper placement of the rocket suppository in relationship to internal and external hemorrhoids.
5. Patients should consult their physician if they are experiencing continued excessive bleeding (bright red blood) from their hemorrhoids.

