

ANAL FISSURE

Anal fissure is an injury in a small area of skin surrounding the anus and is one of the common diseases in Qatar. It occurs in all ages and both sexes most commonly in young people. Fissure occurs as a result of chronic constipation, but it happens in women during pregnancy and childbirth. In most cases, the treatment is conservative; however, chronic and severe cases are treated surgically, which varies depending on the patient's condition and the surgeon's expertise. We usually treat the fissure under local anesthesia by fissurectomy through the use of radiofrequency and anal stretching within 10-15 minutes.

SYMPTOMS OF ANAL FISSURE

Patients with anal fissure experience severe pain despite its small size. This is due to the high-sensitivity of the area, which occurs with defecation and may continue for an hour. Other symptoms are appearance of lump at the edge of the fissure, bleeding, mucus secretions and itchiness in the area.

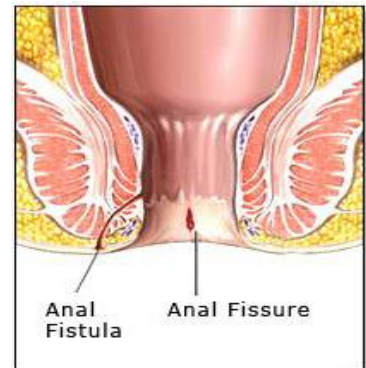
TYPES OF ANAL FISSURE

Acute Anal Fissure

It is a superficial wound causing excruciating pain. This fissure usually heals within 1-2 weeks by using the appropriate treatments.

Chronic Anal Fissure

Occurs due to the failure of healing of acute fissure and has deeper and larger edges. This may be accompanied by the appearance of a lump (sentinel pile) at the edge of the fissure and causes spasm of the muscle surrounding the anus, leading to lack of blood flowing to the anus, this will affect the efficiency of healing of the wound and causes anal constriction.



CAUSES OF ANAL FISSURE IN ADULTS

1 - Severe chronic constipation, as a result of the pressure of the hard stools on the back leading to a injury in the tissue surrounding the anus.

2 - Pregnancy and childbirth in women, as a result of tissue rupture supporting the anus due to the pressure during childbirth.

3 – Post Hemorrhoidectomy and fistulectomy surgeries, due to the constriction of anal wall and poor healing which narrows the anus.

4 – Inflammatory Bowel Diseases, such as Chron's Disease

ANAL FISSURE IN CHILDREN

Fissures happen in the first three years of life where children are learning to control the mechanism of defecation. Pain is always associated with cracked anal wall upon defecation. Fissure in children are treated through the use of topical ointments, and laxatives to make stools softer, which helps in the process of healing.

TREATMENT AND PREVENTION OF ACUTE FISSURE IN ANO

In most cases, healing of acute fissure in ano takes 1-2 weeks, the purpose of treatment is to reduce pain sensation, which helps the process of healing:

- 1 - Warm sitz bath, helps to relax the muscle and reduce pain
- 2 - Wash the anal area carefully with water and pat dry gently.
- 3 - Preventing chronic constipation, by eating fiber-rich foods such as broccoli, cauliflower, bread crust, which contains bran; and increasing water intake and juices and having a healthy lifestyle through exercising daily.

DRUG TREATMENT

- 1 - The use of painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, helps to reduce pain.
- 2 - Ointments containing local anesthetic and cortisone, works to reduce the pain in defecation and treats inflammation and swelling associated with the crack.
- 3 - Nitroglycerine ointment (rectogesic ointment), leads to muscle relaxation of the anus, which reduces pain and increases blood flow to the rift.

SURGICAL TREATMENT

Traditional Surgical Method

Fissure in ano has been treated under general anesthesia in a number of ways. Anal stretching is performed to relieve the pressure on the rift. Healing takes two to three weeks, however, general anesthesia is needed and the relaxation of the muscle might lead to lack of control of gas and feces. Thus, the process is replaced by the open or close percutaneous lateral sphinctrotomy, which can be done under general or local anesthesia where a cut is made in the internal sphincter, either the right or the left to relieve the pressure inside the anal canal and helps increase the blood flow to the area and heal the rift. This process requires a highly experienced surgeon because this can cause hemorrhage or anal fistula. Other traditional surgery is by cutting down the sphincter underneath the fissure and trimming its edges to relieve the pressure within the anus and enhance healing of the fissure.

Modern Surgical treatment

The modern way, which we adopt in our center, the treatment of anal fissure is done within 10 minutes with minimal pain under local anesthesia where the patient can go back to his normal life right after the surgery. Through selective anal stretching to reduce the pressure inside the anal canal with no harmful effect on the sphincter and without any complications such as bleeding or fistula formation, sentinel piles can be removed on the same session. Healing of the fissure usually takes 2-3 weeks.