

Banding of haemorrhoids

What are haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids, also known as piles, are soft fleshy lumps just inside your back passage (anus). They have a rich blood supply and bleed easily, usually causing fresh bright-red bleeding when you have had a bowel movement. They do not usually cause pain but can cause itching around your anus. When large, they can pass through your anus (prolapsed pile), feeling like a lump when you clean yourself.

Haemorrhoids develop gradually, often over a long period of time. They often run in families and can be made worse by pregnancy.

Are there any alternatives to banding the haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids can often be treated by simple measures, such as making sure your bowel movements are bulky and soft, and that you do not strain while opening your bowels. Drinking plenty of fluid and increasing the amount of fibre in your diet usually improves the way your bowels work.

If these simple measures do not work, your surgeon may recommend banding the haemorrhoids.

Banding is usually recommended for internal haemorrhoids, if you have significant external and internal haemorrhoids, your surgeon may recommend haemorrhoidectomy.

What does the procedure involve?

You will not need an anaesthetic as there are no nerves that sense pain at the top of your anal canal.

Your surgeon will examine carefully your back passage and lower bowel using a small telescope.

Your surgeon will pass a device through the telescope and use it to place a silicone band onto the lining of your anal canal.

The band should block the blood supply to the haemorrhoid, causing it to shrink back up your anal canal.

Banding at times can be done along with your colonoscopy, done for investigating the cause for per rectal bleeding.

What complications can happen?

General complications

- infection
- allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication

Banding complications

- difficulty passing urine
- bleeding after the procedure
- feeling faint or light-headed
- recurrence of haemorrhoids

Consequences of this procedure

After Banding: Pain is more of like a dull ache or sense of fullness.

With banding, expect a bit of increased bleeding at around 3-5 days from the procedure, when the banded haemorrhoids fall off.

How soon will I recover?

After the procedure you should be able to go home.

You should be able to return to work the next day unless you are told otherwise.

Haemorrhoids can come back. You can reduce this risk by not straining while opening your bowels, drinking plenty of fluid and increasing the amount of fibre in your diet to avoid constipation.

Regular exercise should improve your long-term health. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Summary

Banding is usually a safe and effective way of treating haemorrhoids when simple measures have failed.

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