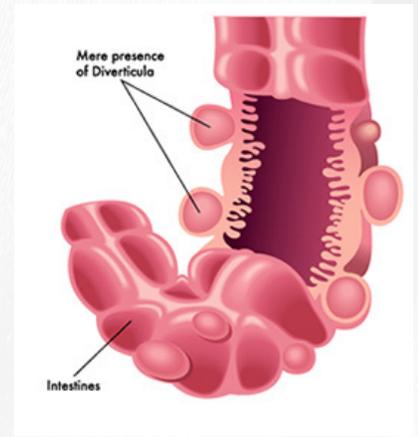




DIVERTICULOSIS



WHAT IS DIVERTICULOSIS?

Diverticulosis occurs when small, bulging pouches (diverticula) develop in your digestive tract. They mostly form in the lower part of the colon. Most people who have diverticulosis do not have symptoms or problems. If these pouches get inflamed, it can lead to **diverticulitis**, which is a condition in which the diverticula are infected.

RISK FACTORS

- Genetics
- Lifestyle factors
 - Diets low in fiber and high in red meat
 - Lack of physical activity
 - Taking certain medication such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and steroids
 - Obesity
 - Smoking
- Older than 50

SYMPTOMS

- Diverticulosis - possible chronic symptoms including:
 - Bloating
 - Constipation or diarrhea
 - Cramping or pain in the lower abdomen
- Diverticulitis - If developed may cause acute symptoms including:
 - Abdominal pain (lower left side)
 - Constipation or diarrhea
 - Fevers and chills
 - Nausea or vomiting

Complications of diverticulitis include: abscess, fistula, intestinal obstruction, peritonitis

DIAGNOSIS

- Blood test
- Stool test
- Colonoscopy
- Imaging tests (CT scan, ultrasound, MRI)

TREATMENTS

- If diverticulosis is causing chronic symptoms:
 - High fiber foods or fiber supplements
 - Medication to reduce inflammation
 - Probiotics
 - Possible antibiotics
- Diverticulitis
 - Antibiotics
 - Clear liquid diet for bowel rest
 - Tylenol for pain management
 - Antispasmodic

PREVENTION

- Lifestyle changes may help decrease the risk of diverticulitis. This includes:
 - Eating a diet high in fiber and low in red meat
 - Being physically active on a regular basis
 - No smoking
 - Maintaining a healthy weight