

Towards Wellness Centre

Providing Solutions To Complex Chronic Health Conditions

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Diverticulitis occurs when pouches form in the wall of the colon (diverticula) and become inflamed or infected. Diverticulitis is characterised by abdominal pain, fever, and changes in bowel movements. Most individuals who develop diverticula (small pouches in the intestinal lining) do not develop symptoms of the condition.

Diverticula disease updates from GI Society.

[More info](#)

Note: Always seek advice from a doctor before beginning any listed treatments, medications or supplements.

Diverticulitis symptoms may last from a few hours to a week or longer. The most common symptom is abdominal pain which is usually in the lower left side, that is sometimes worse with movement. Other symptoms include:

- Fever and chills
- Bloating and gas
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Nausea and sometimes vomiting
- Loss of appetite

Bio Medical Solutions

Professional Support: Working with a trained practitioner can assist you to develop skills to calm anxiety and can also equip you with knowledge to find your next steps towards wellness. Please ensure that you find a practitioner who understands how to navigate the territory of complex chronic health conditions.

[More info](#)

Oral Antibiotics: Oral antibiotics may be prescribed by your doctor to help heal the intestinal lining. Most cases of diverticulitis improve within 2-3 days however it is important to keep taking the antibiotics for the full prescribed duration.

Pain killers: that are gentle on the stomach (such as paracetamol) may be prescribed by your doctor to help relieve pain.

Liquid diet: Mild diverticulitis may be treated with oral antibiotics and the patient is advised to stick to a fluid-only diet until symptoms improve. Solid foods that are high in fibre can aggravate symptoms and should be introduced slowly over time as the patient recovers.

Hospitalisation: In hospital, antibiotics, fluids and nutrition are given intravenously (via needle), which allows the bowel to rest. Hospitalisation may be required if any of the following situations apply

- Pain can't be controlled with paracetamol
- The patient is unable to drink enough fluid to for adequate hydration
- The patient is in poor health or has a weakened immune system
- The patient is unable to ingest antibiotics orally

Surgery: If the patient experiences recurrent attacks of diverticulitis or complications such as abscess, peritonitis or fistula, surgery may be required to remove the diseased section of the colon. marrow suppression, scarring of the liver and cancer. Patients on this medication require close monitoring for side effects.

Ongoing treatment: after a diverticulitis attack may involve

- Gradually increasing the amount of fibre in your diet through fruits, vegetables, bran, and possibly the regular use of a fibre supplement
- Ensuring you get plenty of fluids daily
- Maintaining regular doctor visits for monitoring of your diverticulitis. A colonoscopy or barium enema X-ray probably may be done about 6 weeks after an episode, when symptoms are under control, to look for any other complications, such as inflammatory bowel disease or colon cancer.

Alternative Solutions

Mindfulness: is a set of skills for healing, intuition, insight, calmness, focus, resilience and hope that you can develop to counter the stresses that chronic illness brings. You can literally "train your mind to promote healing. Mindfulness has a positive flow on affect into every aspect of a person's life. For more info click here.

[More info](#)

Alkaline Diet: Initially a diet should be liquid during an episode of diverticulitis and fibre foods slowly introduced thereafter. An alkaline based diet may help some, a detailed list of alkaline diet foods is [here](#).

Best foods during an attack: During an attack start with a clear liquid diet, then as recovery progresses move onto a soft food and then low fibre diet as detailed below. Once recovered from a diverticulitis episode you can

return to a **high fibre diet** and even introduce a fibre supplement to aid digestion and ease pressure on the digestive tract.

- Clear liquid diet suggested foods:
 - Uncarbonated water
 - Fruit juice without pulp (prune juice is not recommended)
 - Tea or coffee with no cream
 - Clear Broth
 - Gelatins -Popsicles (ice blocks) with no fruit pulp.
- Soft diet suggested foods include:
 - Cooked and pureed fruits and vegetables without skins, seeds
 - Mashed potatoes
 - Soups
 - Jello (Jelly)
 - Pudding
 - Yogurts without fruit
- Low fiber diet suggested foods:
 - Enriched white bread
 - White rice or plain pasta, or noodles
 - Low-fiber cereals
 - Milk, yogurt or cheese without seeds or nuts
 - Most raw, canned or cooked fruits without skins, seeds
 - Canned or well-cooked vegetables without seeds, hulls or skins
 - Tender meat, poultry, fish, and eggs
 - Smooth peanut butter
 - Desserts without seeds or nuts

Foods to AVOID: during an episode the following should be avoided

- Whole grain anything: breads, muffins, cornbread, pastas
- Bran, millet, buckwheat, oatmeal, flax, seeds, nuts,
- Yogurts with fruit skins or seeds, strong cheeses
- Dries peas, beans, lentils, legumes
- Tough and gristle meats
- Raw Fruits and berries with pulp or seeds, dried fruit
- Raw vegetables from the cruciferous family e.g broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale
- Caffeine, chocolate, coconut (sorry to all coffee lovers, chocoholics, and soda fanatics)
- High spiced food, dressings, salsa, hot sauce
- Fruit or vegetable juices with pulp and prune juice
- Crunchy peanut butter
- Popcorn

Staying hydrated: drinking plenty of water may help with digestion.

Reduce stress: stress is known to cause spasms and worsen symptoms for patients. try reducing stress with mindfulness (as detailed above).

Probiotics: are found in certain foods or you may take probiotic supplements. Probiotics act very much like the good bacteria in your gut. Some strains might work for one person but not others. Other foods that contain probiotics include sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir and kombucha. Discuss with your doctor.

Prebiotics: are food for probiotics and for intestinal bacteria, they are available as a supplement and can also be found in some foods. Adding prebiotics to your diet may improve the function of your normal intestinal bacteria. Using prebiotics along with probiotics might make the probiotics more effective. Prebiotics are nondigestible carbohydrates found in things like artichokes, honey, whole grains, bananas, onions and garlic.

Fish oil: Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish oil, may have anti-inflammatory properties and may help reduce diverticulitis symptoms (On the other hand, some omega-6 fatty acids, found in meats and dairy products, tend to increase inflammation.). Discuss with your doctor before starting fish oil supplementation as taking high doses of fish oil, or taking it in combination with blood thinning medication, may lead to bleeding problems.

Herbs: Always check with your doctor before beginning any treatments including herbs. Some herbs that may help to relieve symptoms of and prevent diverticulitis include

Caraway: May help to provide relief from cramping pain.

Chamomile: May help to treat flatulence and bowel cramping. DO NOT use it if you are pregnant, taking birth control pills, or have a history of hormone-related cancers. High doses may interact with blood-thinning medications. DO NOT use chamomile if you are allergic to Ragweed or related plants.

Slippery Elm: Coats the wall of the colon and has a soothing effect.

Cat's claw: is an anti-inflammatory. DO NOT take cat's claw if you are pregnant, have an autoimmune disease, or have Leukemia. Cat's claw can interfere with a variety of medications. Speak with your doctor.

Marshmallow: May help to treat diverticulitis. Avoid marshmallow if you have diabetes. Marshmallow can interfere with the absorption of many medications and can interact negatively with lithium.

Goldenseal: Is anti-bacterial and may help in cases of infection.

Echinacea: may help fight off infection and boosting immunity

Flaxseed: may be helpful in treating diverticulosis. It contains fiber and works as a bulk forming laxative, softening stool and speeding transit time through the intestine. Use ground flaxseed, 15 g per day.

Licorice: may reduce spasms and inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract. DO NOT take licorice for a long period of time, or if you have high blood pressure, heart failure, kidney disease, or hypokalemia. Look for products that contain only DGL, which means the majority of the blood pressure raising component of licorice has been removed.

Turmeric: has anti-inflammatory properties and may be beneficial to patients with diverticulitis.

Aloe vera juice: As irregularity of bowel movement can be a cause of diverticulitis, aloe vera juice may help.

Aloe Mucilaginous Polysaccharides: is a concentrated form of aloe vera extract which is supposed to help treat diverticulitis. The glucose sugar and mannose molecules present in this product is said to ease symptoms of ulcerative colitis, another condition which affects the digestive tract.

Acupuncture: is an ancient chinese technique which uses needles and may help improve symptoms for patients with IBD.

Diverticulitis can be difficult to diagnose from the symptoms, alone because there are other conditions that can cause similar symptoms, such as IBS, inflammatory bowel disease, coeliac disease and bowel cancer. Initially your doctor may recommend blood tests to rule out such other conditions.

Blood and urine tests: to check for signs of infection.

Pregnancy test: for women capable of children to rule out pregnancy as a cause of abdominal pain.

Liver function tests: to rule out other causes of abdominal pain.

Stool test: to rule out infection in people who have diarrhea.

CT scan: which can indicate inflamed or infected pouches and confirm a diagnosis of diverticulitis. CT can also determine the severity of diverticulitis and guide treatment.

Crohns Disease, Celiacs Disease, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Ulcerative Colitis, Diverticulitis, Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Disclaimer: Information and advice shared by the Towards Wellness Centre is of a general nature and is not intended to replace qualified medical advice. The Towards Wellness Centre does not accept responsibility for any actions or treatments undertaken.