



Diverticulitis

Diverticulitis occurs when small pouches in the wall of the colon (diverticuli) become infected. Many people who have these pouches have no symptoms, but when infection occurs diverticulitis can cause abdominal pain (usually in the left lower part of the stomach), fever, constipation, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting.

HOW TO CARE FOR YOURSELF AT HOME

- + If you have been prescribed an antibiotic by the doctor, take it as directed, and for as long as directed, even if your symptoms are resolved prior to finishing the prescribed amount.
- + If the doctor has suggested a clear liquid diet, follow their instructions.
- + To prevent reoccurrence, eat a diet high in fiber. Good sources of fiber include fruit, oats, beans, peas and green leafy vegetables. If you do not already eat fiber-rich foods, wait until after your symptoms get better to start, then add high fibre foods slowly and a little at a time.
- + You do not need to avoid seeds, nuts, popcorn or other similar foods.
- + Aim to drink 6 to 8 cups (1.5 to 2 L) of water each day.

WHEN TO GET HELP

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if you are experiencing any of the following:

- + Increasing abdominal pain.
- + Unable to keep clear fluids down for more than 12 hours.
- + Signs of dehydration, including excessive thirst, little or no urination, dizziness or light-headedness.
- + Fever of 38.0°C (100.4°F) or more not relieved by acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil).

TO LEARN MORE ASK

- + Your family doctor.
- + HealthLinkBC - call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf or hard of hearing) or go online to www.HealthLinkBC.ca

RECOMMENDED FOLLOW UP

- Follow up with your primary care provider in ___ days.

Reproduced with permission from Vancouver Coastal Health.

Find this information sheet on the BC Emergency Medicine Network website:

www.bcemn.ca/clinical_resource/diverticulitis/