

# Haemorrhoids

It is hard to believe that nowadays, in spite of easy access to information of every sort, that talking about haemorrhoids is still taboo. Although haemorrhoids are unpleasant, they may be treated quite easily.

In general, haemorrhoids, which are also known as **piles**, are not noticeable until they bleed, or cause **itchiness** or excessive **moisture** in the anorectal area of the body. When first noticed in the form of **slight** bleeding or **mini-incontinence**, they may cause a lot of unnecessary **worry** to patient as they are generally **benign** and easy to treat. The symptoms, unfortunately, may also indicate a more serious **underlying problem** such as colorectal cancer. Some of the risk factors are: unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and **obesity**.

**Pharmacy customer:** Hello.  
PTA: Hello.

**(Blushing)** Mm, I am having some problems at the moment. Eh, do you have anything for haemorrhoids?

Yes, certainly. We have quite a few different creams and **suppositories** that help to **soothe** the **discomfort** and reduce the worst effects of haemorrhoids.

**Do you have anything with bufexamac in it? I used to live in the USA and found that it helped when I had any problems.**

I am sorry but products containing bufexamac have been removed from the market in most European countries since May 2010.

**Oh, so what do you recommend?**

Firstly, I would recommend this balsam here that helps to soothe the affected area. It contains hamamelis, which is astringent.

**Hamamelis? Botany was not one of my favourite subjects at school!**

It is also called **witch-hazel**. It helps to **contract** swollen **blood vessels** back to normal size, especially varicosities, which are basically what haemorrhoids are.

**That sounds good. Is there anything else that I can do?**

Aside from taking sitz baths, it is a good idea to consult your doctor.

**Isn't it enough to just use this balsam?**

If the symptoms show no signs of **improvement** in the next three to

five days or so, you should definitely go to your GP. This is just to make sure that there is nothing serious.

**I see. I suppose you're right there.** There are a few things that you can do yourself to help **alleviate** the problem and the **accompanying symptoms**.

**Such as?**

Well, avoid **straining** when using the toilet. And go as soon as you feel the need to. I know that in some jobs this is not always possible. It's also essential to take a look at your nutrition.

**Nutrition? In what way?**

A **high-fibre** diet is one of the ways of increasing the volume and softness of the stool, which helps to avoid straining.

**Can't I just take laxatives?**

Laxatives are rather drastic. It's better to slowly increase your intake of high-fibre foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables and to drink plenty of fluids, such as water, herbal tea and **diluted** fruit juices.

**Okay. Is there anything else that I can do?**

Exercise really helps and avoiding sitting or standing for longer periods is recommended by most nutritional experts.

**Thank you so much for your helpful advice.**

No problem, we're here to help. Goodbye. ■

*Catherine Croghan,  
Lecturer in English and native speaker*

## VOCABULARY

piles	(ugs.) Hämorrhiden
itchiness	Juckreiz
moisture	(hier) Nässe
slight	leicht
mini-incontinence	Feininkontinenz
worry	Sorge
benign	gutartig
underlying problem	zu Grunde liegendes Problem
obesity	Adipositas, Fettleibigkeit
blushing	erröten
suppositories	Zäpfchen
soothe	lindern
discomfort	(hier) Beschwerden
witch-hazel	Zaubernuss
contract	sich zusammenziehen
blood vessels	Blutgefäße
improvement	Besserung, Verbesserung
alleviate	erleichtern
accompanying symptoms	Begleitsymptome
straining	(sich) anstrengen
high-fibre	reich an Ballaststoffen
laxatives	Abführmittel
diluted	verdünnt