



## Rectal Prolapse

Rectal prolapse is a health condition that might sound alarming at first, but it's important to know that it's typically not a medical emergency. This condition arises when the rectum, which is the final section of the large intestine, slips outside its usual position and protrudes through the anus. This displacement is often due to weakening of the muscles and ligaments that normally hold the rectum in place.

It's crucial to distinguish between rectal prolapse and another common condition, hemorrhoids. Hemorrhoids involve the swelling of veins around the rectum and anus, whereas rectal prolapse refers to the rectum itself pushing through the anus. A key difference between the two is that hemorrhoids may resolve on their own with time and treatment, while rectal prolapse typically requires medical intervention.

The symptoms of rectal prolapse can vary greatly among individuals. Some people may not notice any symptoms at all, while others may experience a range of discomforts. Common signs include a feeling of a bulge or protrusion after coughing, sneezing, or lifting heavy objects. Some individuals may notice a mucous discharge in their stool. Pain and rectal bleeding are other possible symptoms. Fecal incontinence, which is the inability to control bowel movements, is another symptom that some people may experience. In severe cases, the prolapsed rectum may need to be manually pushed back into the anus.

Despite the discomfort it can cause, rectal prolapse is not a common condition. However, certain factors can increase the likelihood of its occurrence. These risk factors include aging, pregnancy, and certain types of injuries or illnesses.

When it comes to managing rectal prolapse, there are several treatment options available. In the early stages, non-surgical treatments such as stool softeners, suppositories, and other medications may be used to manage symptoms. However, as the condition progresses, surgical intervention is often necessary. The specific type of surgery will depend on the individual's overall health and the severity of the prolapse.

Recovering from surgery for rectal prolapse can vary from person to person. It depends on the specific surgical procedure performed and the individual's overall health status. Following the healthcare provider's post-operative care instructions is crucial to ensuring a smooth recovery and preventing complications.

In conclusion, rectal prolapse can be an uncomfortable and potentially distressing condition. However, it's important to remember that it's treatable and manageable. If you suspect you

may have rectal prolapse, don't hesitate to seek medical attention. Early diagnosis and treatment can significantly improve the prognosis and enhance the quality of life.

## **Center For Digestive Health & Nutrition**

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The Center for Digestive Health & Nutrition is a private medical practice comprised of experienced Gastroenterologists, Nurse Practitioners, and staff members dedicated to preventing and treating digestive disorders. Our physicians have been serving the needs of those in Western Pennsylvania and surrounding areas since 1977, having cared for tens of thousands of individuals with digestive problems. Our mission is to deliver high-quality gastroenterology services efficiently and cost-consciously. We realize the very sensitive nature of GI illness and understand the necessity to provide our services in an environment that stresses patient privacy and confidentiality and where patient satisfaction is the goal. Appointments can be conveniently scheduled online via our website above. Learn more about digestive issues on Instagram @thedigestivetract

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