

Radiation Proctitis

Proctitis is defined as inflammation or irritation of the anus and rectum. Proctitis can be caused by radiation to the pelvis. Proctitis can also be caused by diarrhea, constipation, chronic bowel disease, infection, and hemorrhoids.

Ways to Manage:

- Control diarrhea
 - If you are having diarrhea, talk to your physician or nurse about possible causes and ways to treat it.
- Control constipation
 - Straining and hard bowel movements can worsen irritation. If you are having constipation, talk to your physician or nurse about possible causes and ways to treat it.
- Take care of your rectal area.
 - Instead of toilet paper, use a baby wipe or squirt of water from a spray bottle to clean yourself after bowel movements.
 - When cleaning the anal area, use a mild soap, and pat the area dry rather than rubbing.
 - Try medicated wipes (also known as witch hazel pads or Tucks medicated pads, which are available over the counter)
 - Over the counter hemorrhoid ointments and creams can help
 - Anusol
 - Preparation H
 - Consider taking sitz baths
 - A sitz bath is simply a bath where you sit in warm water that covers the buttocks and hips for several minutes. Sitz baths can be taken in a normal bath tub or basin, or special basins can be purchased that fit into a toilet bowl.
- Your doctor may prescribe medications to help you.

If you are getting treatment to the lower abdomen, proctitis may continue for 1 to 4 weeks after your last radiation treatment. Continue following the suggestions of your doctor during this time. Ask to speak to a nurse if your symptoms are getting worse or if you have questions or concerns.