

About 50% of Americans over 50 are dealing with hemorrhoids. Pioneer GI Clinic understands the frustration, embarrassment, and discomfort that hemorrhoids cause, so they offer easy-to-access solutions like in-clinic hemorrhoid banding in the Anchorage, Alaska, office. If you're living with hemorrhoids, schedule an appointment, call the office in Anchorage, Alaska.

What are hemorrhoids?

Hemorrhoids are dilated (swollen) veins in your anus and in the last couple of inches of your colon (the lower rectum). There are two types of hemorrhoids:

Internal hemorrhoids

Internal hemorrhoids grow inside the rectum, so they're not visible outside your body.

External hemorrhoids

External hemorrhoids are enlarged veins around the anal opening. An external hemorrhoid may feel like a hard bump. External hemorrhoids may look similar to skin tags (excess skin), but skin tags aren't hard or swollen.

Both internal and external hemorrhoids can sometimes swell excessively, which causes them to prolapse (bulge outside of the anus).

What symptoms do hemorrhoids cause?

External hemorrhoids may not cause symptoms, but it's common to experience issues such as:

- Itching
- Burning
- Discomfort or pain
- Hard lumps around your anus
- Difficulty sitting due to discomfort
- Rectal bleeding

Internal hemorrhoids are often painless unless they prolapse. Some people with internal hemorrhoids experience a sensation of tissue pushing out of their anus during bowel movements. You may also notice bright red blood on toilet tissue when you wipe, or possibly blood in the toilet water.

What causes hemorrhoids?

One of the most common causes of hemorrhoids is straining during bowel movements. Because of this, many people with chronic diarrhea or constipation develop hemorrhoids.

Additional pressure in your abdomen, whether because of weight gain, pregnancy, or regularly lifting heavy weights, can also lead to hemorrhoids.

Hemorrhoids grow more common with age, and around half of all Americans develop hemorrhoids by the age of 50.

How are hemorrhoids treated?

There are a number of different approaches to hemorrhoid treatment. Pioneer GI Clinic offers hemorrhoid banding, which involves placing a rubber band at the base of a hemorrhoid.

The rubber band disrupts the blood supply to the hemorrhoid, and in response the hemorrhoid withers and falls off in a few days. Hemorrhoid banding is a simple in-office procedure, and you can usually return to normal activities the next morning.

If hemorrhoid banding isn't right for you, there are other options like sclerotherapy injections, infrared laser treatment, or surgical hemorrhoid removal. Pioneer GI Clinic recommends the hemorrhoid treatment option that fits your symptoms and lifestyle the best.

If you have itching, pain, and discomfort with bowel movements, reach out for hemorrhoid help at Pioneer GI Clinic.