

Emergency Department Diverticulitis

General Information

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.

Instructions

1. If you have been prescribed an antibiotic by the doctor, take them as directed, and for as long as directed (even if your symptoms are resolved prior to finishing the prescribed amount).
2. If the doctor has suggested a clear liquid diet, follow his or her instructions.
3. 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.
4. You do not need to avoid seeds, nuts, popcorn or other similar foods.
5. Aim to drink 6 to 8 cups (1.5 to 2 L) of water each day.

Return to Emergency if any of the following develop:

- 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).

For more information or questions contact HealthLinkBC at 811.

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