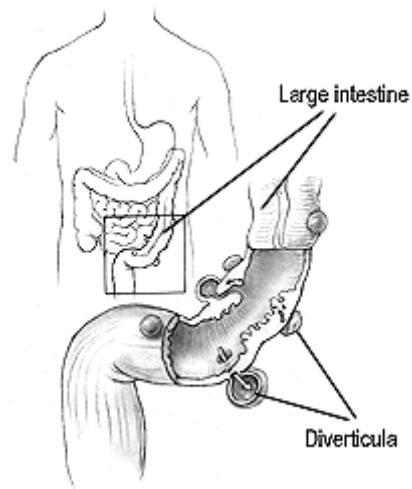


Diverticulosis

What is diverticulosis?

Diverticulosis is a relatively benign condition in which small pouches, or diverticula, form throughout the bowel musculature. This condition tends to increase with age. Decreased intake of fiber may contribute to this condition, as this leads to increased pressure in parts of the colon. Decreased fiber also leads to harder stools, and the need to strain when passing the stools; this also increases pressure in the colon and may contribute to diverticula formation. Occasionally small bits of fecal matter get trapped inside these pouches, which cause them to become inflamed and infected. This condition is then called diverticulitis, and often requires antibiotics to eliminate the infection. Symptoms may include aching abdominal pain, nausea/vomiting, fever, and blood in the stool.



Treatment

Conservative therapy is initially recommended for most cases of diverticulosis. An anti-inflammatory diet with supplementation for intestinal support is started immediately. Increased fiber, fruits and vegetables and aerobic exercise are implemented to normalize bowel function. Foods that should be avoided to reduce irritation include refined sugar and processed foods.