



DIVERTICULAR DISEASE

Bromley

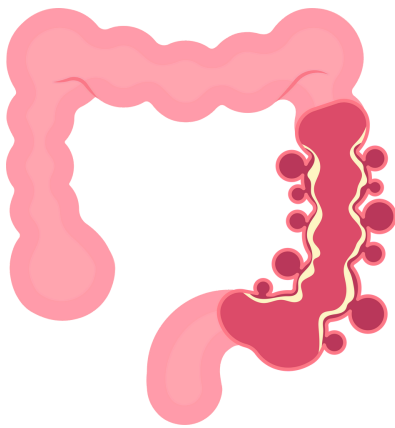
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HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated December 2025

What is diverticular disease?

Diverticular disease is a condition that affects the large intestine, causing abdominal pain and other symptoms. In this condition, small bulges and pouches develop in the walls of the intestine which can sometimes become infected or inflamed which leads to diverticulitis.



Types of diverticular disease:

Diverticulum – a small pouch that sticks out from the wall of the large bowel.

Diverticula – multiple diverticulum

Diverticulitis – when the pouch/pouches become inflamed or infected due to bacteria becoming trapped inside bulges, it can lead to abscesses.

Diverticulosis – the presence of diverticula.

SELF CARE TIPS

TRY HEAT THERAPY

Sometimes heating pads applied to the abdomen can ease pain.

GET MORE VITAMIN D

Some research shows that low vitamin D can cause complications. In order to get the right amount of vitamin D, it is recommended to eat plenty of fish and try to get sunlight each day. In some cases you may need to supplement with vitamin D.

To register with Bromley Well:
Freephone 0808 278 7898
Or register online:
www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct
07985 431484 / 07985 444210
or email
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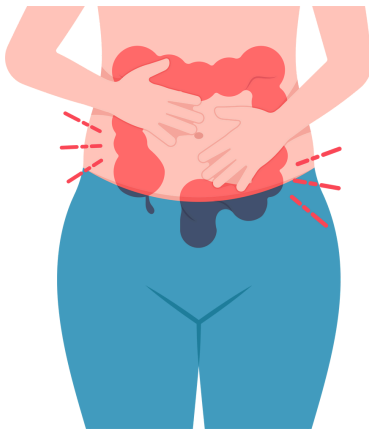
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What are the symptoms?

- Pain in the lower side of the abdomen.
- Stomach pain that gets worse after you eat and gets better when you pass wind or open your bowels.
- Change in bowel habits such as constipation or diarrhoea.
- Blood in your stool.
- Bloating.



What are the causes?

- Some studies suggest that a low fibre diet can increase risk but this is not conclusive.
- Age – after the age of 40 it becomes more common.
- Obesity.
- Smoking.

SELF CARE TIPS

SLOWLY INCREASE FIBRE INTAKE

If you do not already eat much fibre, try slowly increasing your fibre intake and drink plenty of water.

STOP SMOKING

Smoking can increase your risk of developing complications like diverticulitis.

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What about treatment?

- Increase fibre in your diet.
- Use pain relief to ease discomfort – although it is not recommended to use NSAID pain relief (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as aspirin or ibuprofen as these can cause further stomach issues.
- Antibiotics for diverticulitis.
- In cases with serious complications, surgery can be used to remove the affected section but this is rare.

Some myths

Myth 1: You should avoid foods that have tough fibre

No, it was previously believed that foods such as nuts, popcorn and seeds could become lodged in the sacs that are part of diverticular disease. This was said to increase your risk of inflammation and diverticulitis. However, this has been studied and disproven. These food items can be consumed as part of a balanced diet. Additionally, people with diverticular disease should look to increase their fibre intake in general.

SELF CARE TIPS

TRY ALTERNATIVE REMEDIES

It can be beneficial to try to increase your intake of foods and spices such as ginger, turmeric and garlic that can be anti-inflammatory. Please discuss with your doctor before trying any treatment.

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FURTHER RESOURCES

Bladder and Bowel Community

www.bladderandbowel.org/free-just-cant-wait-card/

Charity that provide information and advice for anyone that has a condition that affects their bladder or bowels. They can help get Can't Wait Cards to use public bathrooms if you are having diarrhoea symptoms.

Guts UK

gutscharity.org.uk/advice-and-information/conditions/diverticular-disease/

Factsheet on Diverticular Disease from a charity who are a charity that raise awareness on all things related on the digestive system.

Facebook Support Group

www.facebook.com/groups/diverticularuk/

The longest run diverticular disease and Diverticulitis UK-based support group. This group offers support and discussions for people with diverticular disease based on the NHS guidelines and the latest scientific research.

References: NHS Inform: www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/stomach-liver-and-gastrointestinal-tract/diverticular-disease-and-diverticulitis NHS UK
www.nhs.uk/conditions/diverticular-disease-and-diverticulitis/

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