

COLON & RECTAL CENTER OF ARIZONA

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What You Should Know About Rubber Band Ligation

1) What Is Rubber Band Ligation?

Rubber band ligation is a useful method for treating some cases of internal hemorrhoids. In this treatment, a small rubber band is placed at the base of the hemorrhoid. The rubber band causes the hemorrhoid to shrink in size usually within 3 to 10 days. Since internal hemorrhoids are not sensitive to pain, this method avoids the discomfort of surgery. Typically the rubber band falls off in 5 days at which time you may notice a small amount of painless bleeding. External hemorrhoids are sensitive to pain and cannot be treated this way.

Most people have three internal hemorrhoids that cause their symptoms of bleeding, itching and/or prolapse (sticking out). Generally each internal hemorrhoid needs to be treated individually with a rubber band, usually one at a time to limit discomfort after the procedure. Therefore it takes three to four treatments, performed at intervals of about three weeks, to take care of these symptoms.

2) Will I have any symptoms afterwards?

Most people feel nothing. One person in five may feel the urge to have a bowel movement. One person in ten may feel a dull ache for a day or two. This ache typically resolves on its own but if it has not gone away you should take two Tylenol tablets every three to four hours. You can also use sitz bath, soaking the anal area in comfortably warm, plain water for 20 minutes two or three times a to relieve the discomfort.

3) Do I need to be on a special diet?

No special diet is necessary. Bowel movements will usually occur normally but if straining is a problem take fiber supplements (e.g. Metamucil, Citrucel etc.) as directed.

4) Any activity I cannot do after the procedure?

You should abstain from physical exercise and/or heavy lifting for 24 hours to allow the treated area to heal. You can pursue all physical activities as normal beyond 24 hours.

5) What problems should I look out for?

If you should experience any of the following, call our office immediately, day or night (602) 993-2622:

- A) Severe pain: Although it can be severe it is not common
- B) Severe bleeding (greater than one table spoon): This usually occurs days after the procedure when the hemorrhoid sloughs off. If this happens to you, apply pressure on the hemorrhoid area and go to the emergency room.
- C) Infection: On a very rare occasion, life-threatening infection can develop which can present as trouble with urination, fever (greater than 100 degrees) or severe pain.