

ADRIAN POLGLASE

Professor of Surgery

MB BS (Hons), MS, FRACS, FRCS (Eng), FRCS Ed, FACS

CABRINI MONASH UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY

COLORECTAL SURGERY
LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERY
COLONOSCOPY

A. L. POLGLASE PTY. LTD. A.C.N. 062 956 843

Colorectal - Malvern

SUITE 20, CABRINI MEDICAL CENTRE
ISABELLA STREET, MALVERN 3144
TELEPHONE 9509 8233 FACSIMILE: 9509 0812
PROVIDER NO 216484K
AFTER HOURS: HOME 9824 7525
CALL SERVICE: 9387 1000

EMAIL: alp@colorectalmalvern.com.au
WEBSITE: www.colorectalmalvern.com.au
www.colonoscopymalvern.com.au
www.laparoscopymalvern.com.au

ANAL FISSURE - WHAT IS IT

An **anal fissure** is a **split** in the skin of the lower part of the anal canal. It probably starts as a simple tear and is not necessarily associated with constipation, as most patients have normal bowel activity, and sometimes a tendency towards looseness of stools. It is also possible that a piece of sharp undigested food or violent diarrhea can cause a fissure.

Symptoms

The commonest symptoms of anal fissures are pain at defaecation, bright bleeding which may be on the toilet paper or in the toilet and anal irritation. The condition can wax and wane in severity.

Treatment

Most acute fissures will settle down with conservative (non-operative) treatment which may include stool softeners, appropriate ointment and warm baths. Oral analgesics are also helpful.

A cream called 'Rectogesic' can often heal a fissure but it may have some unpleasant side effects.

Botulinum toxin injections into the anal muscle might sometimes achieve a cure.

If the fissure symptoms are chronic then usually a minor anal operation will be required. This procedure is termed a limited **sphincterotomy** which involves dividing a small portion of one of the muscles around the anal canal (the internal sphincter). This is usually done as a day case, with no overnight stay required. The operation is almost always successful. Complications are very unusual but require informed discussion with Professor Polglase.