



Haemorrhoids (piles)

Haemorrhoids are varicose veins in the rectum and anus, caused by the effect of the hormones which relax all the veins in the body. They usually appear towards the end of pregnancy when the weight of your baby adds a downwards pressure to your pelvic floor, sometimes causing the haemorrhoids to protrude outwards (prolapse). If you have put on a lot of weight or are expecting more than one baby, haemorrhoids are likely to be worse, or if you have had them before, either in a previous pregnancy or at other times. Unfortunately if you have piles during pregnancy, they can recur later in life, and it is important to control your weight and to practise your pelvic floor exercises in an attempt to prevent this happening.

Tips for coping with haemorrhoids

- Try to avoid constipation, which can make mild piles worse as you strain to have your bowels open. High-fibre foods, plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and drinking at least two litres of water daily will help. Reduce your consumption of refined carbohydrate foods such as sweets, chocolate, white bread and white rice.
- Herbal remedies - hamamelis or witch hazel, is a useful lotion to apply directly to piles that are visible, as it is anti-inflammatory and causes the veins to shrink slightly. As far as is known this is safe to use in pregnancy.
- Your doctor may prescribe cream or lotion to apply to the piles
- Aromatherapy - essential oils such as cypress or lemon 3 drops added to your bath, may also help to act as an astringent, causing a shrinking of the haemorrhoids
- Bach flower Rescue remedy cream, applied directly to the piles, may ease discomfort, and Bach crab apple, 2 drops added to a bidet may also help

Some homeopathic remedies which may be useful for haemorrhoids

Try PULSATILLA if you

- have large, congested piles which protrude
- have a lot of pain, itching and bleeding from them
- find them worse as pregnancy progresses and after delivery
- feel emotional, tearful & in need of reassurance and consolation
- also have varicose veins in your legs and/or heartburn & indigestion

Try NUX VOMICA if you

- have large, grape-like, congested piles which protrude
- have a lot of pain and burning
- have constipation with large, hard stools
- have accompanying backache
- feel worse at night & when touched
- feel better if you bathe in cold water
- are irritable, sensitive & quarrelsome



Try SEPIA if you

- have hard large congested painful piles
- have piles that protrude when you strain to open your bowels
- have bleeding & continual oozing
- have a sensation of a hard mass in your rectum
- are sensitive to cold but perspire easily
- feel exhausted & worn out
- don't want sympathy

Try LYCOPODIUM if you

- have large blue-purplish piles
- have piles which are chronic & protrude during defaecation
- suffer profuse bleeding & have moist itchy skin around your anus
- have associated constipation
- feel better if you bathe in warm water
- crave sweet things
- put on a brave front but feel lacking in self-confidence

Try ARSENICUM if you

- have large congested bluish piles which protrude
- have a lot of pain, burning and bleeding
- feel completely debilitated & get tired easily
- feel restless & anxious
- fear being alone & want to be looked after
- are difficult & demanding

Try KALI CARB if you

- have large congested grape-like piles
- have piles which protrude when you have your bowels open or pass urine
- have pain, bleeding & a stitch-like pain in the rectum when you cough
- feel worse towards the end of pregnancy & after delivery
- feel chilly, weak & weary
- are touchy, angry, irritable & sluggish

Always inform your midwife if you are using any natural remedies or receiving treatment from a complementary therapist

For more individualised advice on coping with haemorrhoids, call Expectancy on **0906 400 6227** (calls charged at £1.50 per minute, from a BT landline; calls from mobiles and other networks may vary)