

Central Texas Colon and Rectal Surgeons

Diverticulosis

A common condition of the colon characterized by “pockets” (diverticulae), which form when the lining (mucosa) herniates through the muscle wall of the colon. This condition is most prevalent in the sigmoid colon, and is caused by high pressure in the colon pushing the lining out through the weak areas in the muscle wall. It is not reversible, but less likely to progress if you eat a high fiber diet. There is a misconception that seeds, nuts, and etc stick in the diverticulae. Less than 1% of patients with diverticulosis will ever experience a complication of the process, including bleeding or infection. This condition has nothing to do with cancer

Diverticulitis

This condition is an infection of a diverticulum, which is characterized by fever, left lower quadrant abdominal pain, and high white blood count. It may be treated with antibiotics and occasionally requires surgery.

Polyp

The word denotes a protrusion of tissue above the surface of the colon lining. There are numerous types. The type, size, and number will help determine the frequency of future colonoscopies. Some of the more common are listed below:

Hyperplastic(serrated) polyps- These are usually small and always benign.

However they may suggest that there may be indicators of potential to form cancer elsewhere in the colon.

Adenomatous (tubular) adenomas- These are the most common type and have malignant potential if not removed. They can also be tiny and quite large, but rarely cause any symptoms unless large and near the rectum when they may bleed.

Villous (tubulovillous) adenomas- These are similar to adenomatous polyps, but usually are flat (no stalk). They may become quite large and have a higher malignant potential than adenomas. Almost all cancers initially start out as polyps, but most polyps never turn to cancer. The polyp cancer sequence usually takes years. Excessive intake of animal fat is the chief environmental factor affecting the formation of polyps and cancers. Fruits, vegetables, and antioxidants are protective as may be some medications.