



SANTHOSH HOSPITAL

FOR PILES AND PROCTOLOGY

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THE PROBLEM OF PILES – A NATIONAL PROBLEM

Dr. V. Bharathan

The problem of piles has been pestering the mankind ever since man started walking on two legs. It is the penalty man has to pay for adopting the erect posture, as it is practically unknown in the four legged animals. It is caused mainly by the incessant pulling of gravity and the intermittent pushing during the act of defecation. So the ultimate eradication of piles can be achieved only when man settles down on the moon, where there is no force of gravity to pull on his anal canal or he has to adopt the four legged posture of his fore – fathers. Both these solutions are only of theoretical importance without much practical implication. We can imagine about a Piles-free society probably in the next century when man settles down in some of the celestial planets. Till then we have to face this universal malady which causes a lot of untold miseries and mental sufferings for the afflicted victim.

Piles is a very common condition, almost as the common cold. According to authoritative medical literature, it affects about 50% of the adult population. At this rate, the number of piles patients in our county will come to millions and millions and the important aspect is that most of these people are in the working age group. So the national loss in productivity in the farm and fields activity is colossal and unimaginable. Moreover the amount of absenteeism due to piles disease cannot be assessed properly, as the piles patient, due to the inherent social stigma attached to the disease, does not usually divulge the true nature of his condition. Hither- to piles was considered to be problems for the affected individual and the Piles patient due to his proverbial irritability and idiosyncrasy was at best a source of nuisance to his family members and immediate neighbours also. It is with the intention of attracting the attention of national leaders to the magnitude of this grave national problem, we had undertaken the conduct of free Piles Camps. The K.G.F. camps conducted in December 1985 at Kolar Gold Fields, Karnataka was unique in the history of medicine as nobody had ever conducted a camp for piles on such a vast scale anywhere in the world. In two days

time more than five hundred piles patients were examined and treated free. Moreover in December 1986, we conducted a second follow-up camp to see that every body treated at the first camp was cured of the disease and happy. In 1987 we conducted a camp in Bangalore where more than 1000 piles patients were treated free. And in 1989 a follow-up camp was conducted. In 1990, we conducted a camp in Madras where more than 1400 patients were cured and happy. The ministers, M.P.s, M. L. As and other leaders who participated in the camp were much impressed and they had assured me that they will take up the problem at the national level and convey it to the national leaders so that piles can be taken up for national eradication like Malaria, Tuberculosis etc.

PILES - SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

One of the earliest symptoms of piles is awareness about the disease itself. A normal person has no business to think about his anal canal unless there is some problem there. Once he starts unduly worrying about the lower passages, it is usually the beginning of the mischief. Bleeding during the time of stools is a very important visible manifestation of piles. Piles is otherwise known as Haemorrhoids due to this predominant symptom. As the blood loss increases, the patient becomes anaemic and lethargic and the physical energy and mental efficiency deteriorate. In the early stage, the pile masses are inside the anal canal and the disease manifests by the presentation of symptoms like bleeding, irritation, itching, discomfort, difficulty in passing motion and various other vague symptoms. During the second stage, the pile masses come out during motion but go in automatically after the motion. During the third stage, pile masses come out but they will not go inside, and has to be helped in with the help of fingers. And when the disease progress, the pile masses will come out during coughing, sneezing and weight bearing etc. causing great inconvenience in delicate situation. During the fourth stage, pile masses come out and will not go inside and due to thrombosis and swelling, it will cause unbearable pain and suffering. I remember the story of a Honourable minister who

had to excuse himself from Cabinet sessions under the pretext of meeting some party bosses because of this inconvenient symptom. The mucoid discharge coming from the piles produces intractable itching and irritation, and becomes a social inconvenience for the unfortunate victim. Due to the disturbance and loss of sleep for several nights, the mental equilibrium is also upset and he becomes a candidate for the psychiatrist also. Due to constant wetting and soiling of the under clothes, the patient may have to avoid long journeys and social contacts. So ultimately the piles patient is going for a lonely and depressive phase of life, avoiding public contacts and thinking only about the gloomy picture of his own disease. Eventually the piles patient becomes so morbidly concerned about his bottom, so that whatever topic, political or social, you try to engage him, he always reverts back to his bottom. This is known as the Piles personality.

Another important symptom of piles is constipation difficulty in passing motion – and a sense of incomplete evacuation. “A good morning begins with a good motion”. If you don't get a good motion, the sense of dissatisfaction and irritability will persist throughout the day. Some people go to the toilet with a pack of cigarette and come out satisfied after finishing the whole as smoke, there are some others who go for the morning routine with the newspaper and go through it from top to bottom before attaining their motive. Constipation can be caused by piles. Anybody who goes to the toilet and engages in protracted orgy of straining for half an hour or frequently visits the same and spends a few minutes will ultimately develop piles. There are people who take their regular dose of purgatives and some people go in for daily enemas and there are some others who resort to the help of their fingers for achieving the same goal.

“Gas trouble” is a common complaint of the piles patient, even though the modern medical man does not give much importance to “Gas”, it is a real problem for the patient. Due to the “Gas”, patient can have a lot of vague and ill-defined symptoms in the abdomen, chest and head, stimulating peptic ulcer, heart disease and neurotic problems also. I know a piles patient working in the Gulf who was treated by the Gastro Entrologist and Cardiologist for

his symptoms pertaining to the respective organs; Ultimately he landed in the hands of the Psychiatrist and was admitted in the mental hospital. After undergoing treatment of piles he was pleasantly surprised to see all his symptoms disappear and that he was conveyed to me in his letter. They are subject to vague rheumatic type of pains in the joints, back and legs etc. There may be discomfort and difficulty in passing urine also and some people complain about sexual neurasthenia also. In elderly male patients, it can produce symptoms suggestive of prostatic enlargement. I have seen so many patients posted for operation for prostate getting relieved of their trouble in passing urine after treatment for piles.

Piles patients are traditionally afraid of chicken, eggs, meat and other rich foods. Just like Diabetic patient is detected when he says "Without sugar" in coffee, the piles patient can be easily found out when he cleverly avoids chicken when others are relishing it. Even if you are endowed with all good things in life, piles is a nasty condition which will not allow you to enjoy it. So ultimately the piles patient becomes the laughing stock in any company. Whereas patients with Diabetics, Hypertension and Heart disease proudly present their symptoms in front of the audience, the Piles patient usually avoids mentioning about his condition for fear of losing face in public.

A description of the symptomology of Piles will not be complete without going through other associate conditions like fissure in- Ano, fistula, Prolapse Rectum, Polyp, Peri Anal infection and Abscess. Most of these conditions are seen along with piles. Whatever happens around the Anal Canal, the patient always thinks it is piles.

Fissure-in Ano is one of the most painful Anal disorders. It is a small crack on the Anal margin and every time when the Anal canal dilates during the passage of motion it causes excruciating pain, radiating to surrounding areas lasting for a few hours forcing the tired patients to the bed. Ultimately the patient is afraid of passing motion and takes to strong purgatives and local applications without much benefit.

Fistula-in-ano is actually a communication between the

inside and outside of the Anal canal. It is distressing and troublesome condition producing recurrent infection and discharge of pus and escape of flatus and faecal material also.

Peri Anal abscess is an acutely painful condition caused by local infection, unless it is properly treated by suitable early surgical measures, it can give rise to complications like Fistula-in-Ano.

Prolapse Rectum is a distressing condition where the rectum protrudes outside during motion. Whereas piles appear as discreet masses at 3, 7 & 11 O' clock positions. Prolapse appears almost like a balloon coming out of the Anal opening.

Polyp usually occurs in children appearing as cherry-red nodule coming out of the Anal Canal during motion.

CAUSES OF PILES

As I had mentioned earlier Piles is caused by the unavoidable downward pulling action of gravitational force and the intermittent pulling action of gravitational force and intermittent pushing during daily motion. Heredity is an important factor. I have got so many piles patient in the computer presenting as father and children, Mother and children and other blood relations, just like Diabetes, Hypertension and heart disease, the root cause of Piles is due to irregularities in exercise and sophistication in food habits associated with advance of civilisation. The anal canal is so designed that it should be dilated by the passage of a proper sized motion. For that you should take plenty of fiber-containing food along with the usual food. Instead of correcting their faulty habits of food and exercise, people try to purchase health by paying money to the Doctors and medical shops.

In females, piles is associated with pregnancy and delivery. The increase in intra abdominal pressure and the associated constipation is the causative factor. Most of the cases recover after the deliver only to recur with renewed vigour in the next delivery. So by making use of the family planning methods you are helping your cause in both ways – by preventing unwanted additions to your family as well as by avoiding the onset of a disease like piles. So the

family planning workers can take up this new slogan “for prevention of Piles adopt family planning methods”. But of course this is not applicable to males.

One interesting observation is that Piles is very common in people going to the gulf countries. This is not mentioned in medical literature. Those who don't have piles develop afresh and those having minimal symptoms get aggravated after going to the Gulf. This maybe due to change in climatic conditions and food habits.

Piles-Treatment

It is the intention of clearing certain misunderstandings and misconception about the treatment of piles that this article is presented. Nobody has ever discovered any medicine for the cure of piles in any systems of medicine. Just like treating other diseases like Typhoid and Tuberculosis , you cannot get piles cured by taking medicines internally or by taking a few injection. Don't waste your valuable time and money by prolonged medical treatment. Medicines can at best produce only temporary palliation of symptoms along with the natural ups and downs of the disease with the ever present danger of complications and progression of the disease from first to fourth degrees. Don't delay the treatment of Piles. That will lead to avoidable complications and unnecessary suffering due to complications like infection, Abscess, Fistula and Fissure-in Ano, Thrombosis and prolapsed, severe bleeding and loss of mental peace also.

The piles patient is actually facing a dilemma, if he goes to the ordinary doctor he will be prescribed with the universal ointment and piles tablet which are invariably ineffective. And once he goes to the surgeon he is prescribed with the dreaded operation for piles and the operation is considered to be more painful than a heart operation. So the patient unwillingly goes on prolonging the treatment until he lands up with some complications.

Now there are easy and effective methods for the treatment of piles without much discomfort, prolonged hospitalisation and anaesthesia. Early treatment of piles is easy both for the patient and doctor.

A message for Piles Patient

Piles patients need not be disheartened or disappointed just like Diabetes association, heart foundation and cancer society, there is an association for the piles patient based in Kolar Gold Fields, Karnataka known as Piles Treatment Promotion Council.

For the prevention of Piles and other disease you have to cultivate regular habits in food and exercise. Suppose you take mainly meat, fish, chicken, egg, milk, butter etc. after digestion and absorption there is very little residue left behind. So it is essential that fibre containing foods like fruits and vegetables also should be included in sufficient quantities. As far as possible, fruits should be taken with the outer covering and the habit of preparing fruit juice in modern juicers discarding the fibre containing residue should be discouraged. Taking lot of water is good for the prevention of piles as well as stones in the urinary passages. It is not advisable to sit for a long time at one stretch. Straining too much in the toilet and going to the toilet at frequent intervals is not advisable. And the system of taking laxatives and purgatives is also a bad habit. But fibre – containing bulk producing laxatives like Isabgol Husks can be taken in sufficient quantities for re-educating the bowel habits. By adopting suitable family planning methods, number of deliveries should be brought down so that incidence of piles also will be reduced. Even if you are ill or well it is advisable to go to your Doctor or hospital for a complete medical check-up periodically for the prevention of disease as well as for the detection of early warning signs. During my medical career I have seen so many patients but no normal person has ever come to me and told me “Doctor, I don't have any particular disease, but I feel I should have a medical Check-up”. All that glitters is not gold and all that bleeds from the bottom is not piles. So many patients who have come to me with the firm self made diagnosis of Piles have even turned out to be Carnicoma of the Rectum. Almost all the diseases of the lower passages including carnicoma and piles etc. have common manifestations. So if there is a minor symptom, do not neglect. Now we have got effective diagnostic and preventive methods of Diabetes, Hypertension and heart disease even before the patient is aware of it. So by taking the necessary corrective measures by changing food habits, physical exercise and also by avoiding

smoking and excessive drinking of alcohol, you can be a useful member of the society. Once you become ill, it affects not only your health but it affects the health of the family, society and the nation at large.

Courtesy

HISTORICAL EVENT

Piles Treatment Promotion

Council, Robertsonpet

Kolar Gold fields, Karnataka.

A.I.R.

Calicut

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SANTHOSH HOSPITAL

Where the doors are open for all irrespective
of cash, creed or community.

Where nobody will be denied treatment
due to lack of money.

Neither Kingdom nor Heaven do I desire but only
the selfless service of the suffering Humanity



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