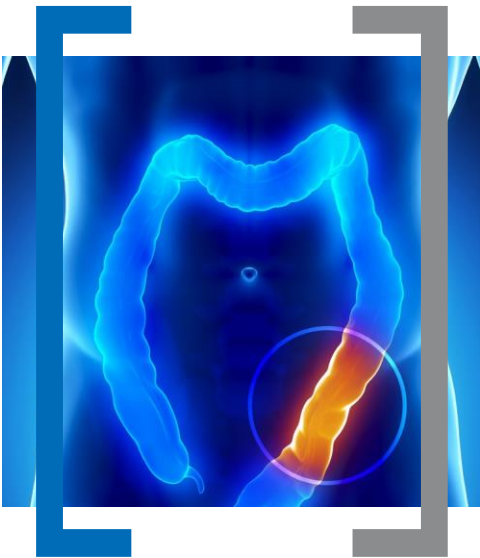




DIVERTICULOSIS AND DIVERTICULITIS INFORMATION AND ADVICE

What you need to know

To help prevent diverticulitis, it is important to eat a high-fibre diet, drink plenty of water, and stay physically active.

The folds of the mucous membrane inside the intestines form small pouches called diverticula. These pouches are often found in a part of the intestine called the colon. They are very common and not dangerous. Sometimes, small amounts of feces can get lodged inside them.

What is diverticulosis?

Diverticulosis is a condition where several diverticula are clustered together in the intestine.

What is diverticulitis?

Diverticulitis is an inflammation of the diverticula, which can lead to infection. It happens when weak spots in the colon wall stretch under pressure, for example, in someone with chronic constipation. If the pressure causes a small tear in the wall of a diverticulum, it can become infected.

Symptoms of diverticulitis

The symptoms can vary from person to person. They can include:

- Lower abdominal pain or cramps on the left side (most common);
- Nausea and vomiting;
- Decreased appetite;
- Alternating constipation or diarrhea;
- Gas or bloating (swollen belly);
- Blood in the stool or bleeding from the rectum (small amounts).

What are the risk factors for diverticulosis or diverticulitis?

- Chronic constipation
- Older age
- Sedentary lifestyle (little or no physical activity)
- Low-fibre, high-fat diet and red meat
- Overweight/obesity
- Smoking
- Certain medications, such as corticosteroids

How are these conditions diagnosed?

During your investigation, the medical team may do a scan of your abdomen. A blood test can also show whether there is an infection.



DIVERTICULOSIS AND DIVERTICULITIS

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

What you need to know

Go to the Emergency department right away if:

- You suddenly feel very weak or dizzy when changing positions.
- You are unable to eat, drink, or keep fluids down.
- You still have a fever (38 °C or 100.4 °F or higher) after two full days of antibiotics.
- You have severe or worsening abdominal pain that is not relieved with medication.
- You have projectile vomiting.
- You have more than two episodes of severe diarrhea.
- You have a large amount of blood in your stool.

How is diverticulitis treated?

In most cases, the treatment involves pain relief, curing the infection (as the case may be), and giving the intestines a rest. Antibiotics will be prescribed for any infection. You will also need to follow a special diet for a few days to reduce the inflammation. You may also be prescribed pain medication. Diverticular perforation is a complication that can happen in severe cases. If it happens to you, you will need surgery.

How to prevent diverticulosis and diverticulitis?

- Follow the food plan and consult the nutritionist.
- Eat fresh, unprocessed foods.
- Eat a healthy, varied, and balanced diet.
- Chew your food well to aid with digestion and reduce gas.
- Eat small meals and supplement with snacks.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Have a bowel movement as soon as you feel the urge.

Resources

You can call **Info-Santé (811)** at any time.

Clinical intake department

(from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday, except holidays):

- **Hôpital Anna-Laberge** | 450-699-2425, ext. 4383
- **Hôpital du Suroît** | 450-371-9920, ext. 2835

Reference:

- CHU de Québec – Guide d'enseignement Diverticulite (2018)

Our mission

Maintain, improve, and restore the health and well-being of the Québec population by providing access to a set of quality, integrated health and social services, thereby contributing to the social and economic development of Québec.

Our vision

Accessible, efficient health care and services that are adapted to the needs of Quebecers.

Our goals

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest fulfils its ambitions by constantly innovating, which allows it to stand out and excel through:

- The excellence of its local, integrated care and services offer focused on interdisciplinarity, accessibility, and adaptation to the needs of the population;
- Its courage to question and improve its professional, clinical, and management practices;
- Recognition for the contribution of its staff and implementation of human resources management practices;
- The strength of its relationships with its partners.

Our values

Our actions are guided by five interdependent, cohesive values: compassion, collaboration, commitment, confidence, and consistency.