

## Hemorrhoid Care

Radiation to the rectum or perianal region (near the anus) can worsen hemorrhoids or cause rectal or perianal irritation. This can lead to pain, bleeding, bowel urgency or frequency, or a feeling of incomplete voiding. Please follow the recommendations below in the order they are given, starting with Step 1. If your symptoms are not controlled by the recommendation, then proceed to the next step. However, you should **continue to use sitz baths** throughout all the steps.

### For External Hemorrhoids

#### Step 1: Sitz bath

- A sitz bath is a bath where you sit in warm water that covers the buttocks and hips. Sitting in warm water allows more blood to reach the area, and thus promotes healing and relieves discomfort.
- You will need a bathtub, shallow bucket or a plastic sitz bath. The plastic sitz bath sits over a toilet. You can buy a plastic sitz bath at most drugstores.
- Instructions: Fill up your bathtub, bucket or plastic sitz bath with warm water. The water should be warm enough to be almost uncomfortable, but not warm enough to burn. Sit in the water for about 10-20 minutes 2-3 times a day. Afterwards, gently pat the area dry with a clean, cotton towel or air dry.

#### Step 2: Use Preparation H or Generic Equivalent Cream (over-the-counter)

- Clean the area gently with a soft moist cloth or alcohol-free baby wipe. Use a tissue to apply the cream. Use Preparation H up to 4 times a day.

#### Step 3: Use Hydrocortisone 1% cream (over-the-counter)

- Please follow the same instructions as Step 2 above.

#### Step 4: Use Hydrocortisone 2.5% cream (prescription)

- Please follow the same instructions as Step 2 above.

### For Internal Hemorrhoids

#### Step 1: Preparation H or Generic Equivalent Suppository (over the counter)

- Best use of suppository is at night before bedtime, use up to 4 times a day.
- You may try applying KY jelly to suppository for easier insertion.

#### Step 2: Hydrocortisone 25 mg Suppository (prescription)

- Please follow the same Internal Hemorrhoids Step 1 instructions.

#### Step 3: Proctofoam-HC (prescription)

- Please refer to Proctofoam-HC instructions.

**NOTE:** Do not apply creams or use suppositories within 1 hour prior to radiation treatments.