

A Patient's Guide to Diverticular Disease

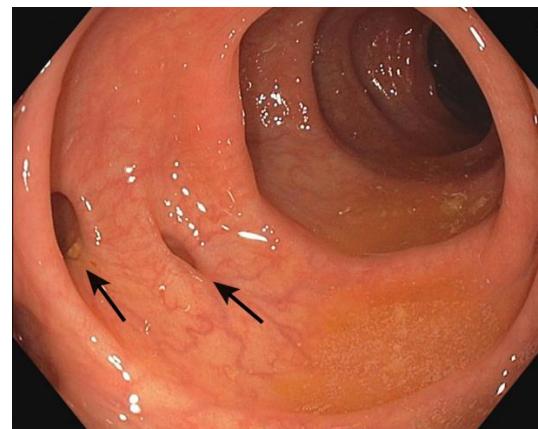
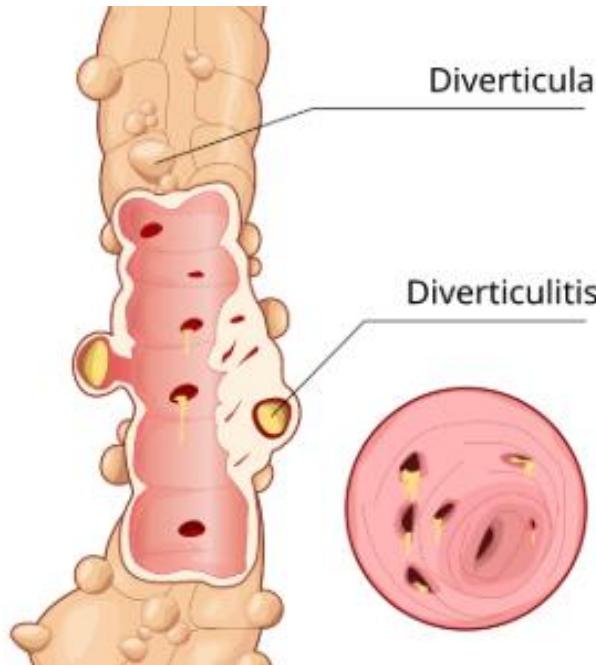
Rachel Garrity, MD

What is Diverticular Disease?

- Diverticula are small pouches or pockets that form in the wall of your colon (large intestine)
- Diverticulosis means you have these pouches in your colon.
- Diverticulitis occurs when these pouches become inflamed or infected

What causes Diverticular Disease?

- Age related changes (colon naturally weakens with age)
- Low fiber diet
- Genetics
- Obesity
- Smoking



What are the symptoms?

- Most people with diverticulosis have no symptoms
- Some people with diverticulosis may experience bloating or changes in bowel habits
- Signs of diverticulitis include fever, left sided abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting

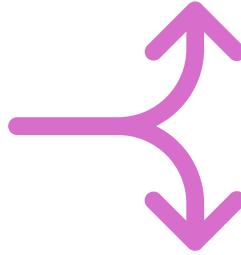
When to seek emergency care?

- Severe abdominal pain
- Fever
- Inability to keep down food or water
- Signs of bleeding from the rectum

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Diverticulitis Treatment



Uncomplicated Case:

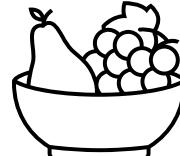
- Can often be managed at home with clear liquid diet
- If you are immunocompromised or have symptoms such as fever or persistent pain, oral antibiotics may be recommended

Complicated Case:

- Some cases of diverticulitis have complications like bleeding, abscess formation, or bowel perforation.
- These cases are managed in the hospital due to the need for close monitoring, IV antibiotics, and potential surgery

What you can do to protect yourself from complications of diverticular disease:

High fiber diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and grains. Seeds and nuts are safe!



Increase physical activity



Avoid smoking or harmful medications like NSAIDs, steroids, and opioids

