

## UOA MS

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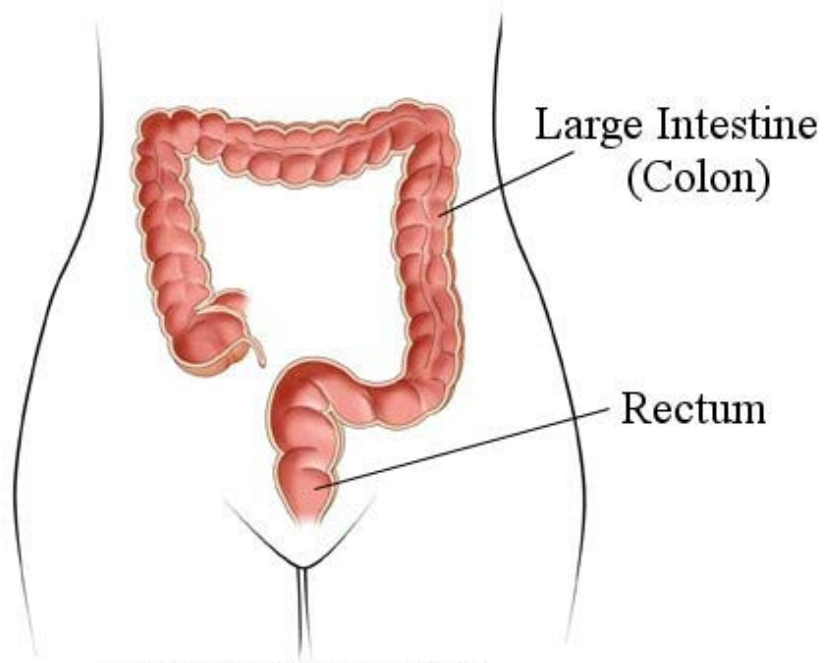
**Patient Name:**

**Special Instructions:**

**Follow Up:**

# Rectal Bleeding

Rectal bleeding is when blood passes out of the anus. It is usually a sign that something is wrong. It may not be serious, but it should always be evaluated. Rectal bleeding may present as bright red blood or extremely dark stools. The color may range from dark red or maroon to black (like tar). It is important that the cause of rectal bleeding be identified so treatment can be started and the problem corrected.



## CAUSES

- **Hemorrhoids.** These are enlarged (*dilated*) blood vessels or veins in the anal or rectal area.
- **Fistulas.** These are abnormal, burrowing channels that usually run from inside the rectum to the skin around the anus. They can bleed.
- **Anal fissures.** This is a tear in the tissue of the anus. Bleeding occurs with bowel movements.
- **Diverticulosis.** This is a condition in which pockets or sacs project from the bowel wall. Occasionally, the sacs can bleed.
- **Diverticulitis.** This is an infection involving diverticulosis of the colon.
- **Proctitis and colitis.** These are conditions in which the rectum, colon, or both, can become inflamed and pitted (*ulcerated*).
- **Polyps and cancer.** Polyps are non-cancerous (*benign*) growths in the colon that may bleed. Certain types of polyps turn into cancer.
- **Protrusion of the rectum.** Part of the rectum can project from the anus and bleed.
- **Certain medicines.**
- **Intestinal infections.**
- **Blood vessel abnormalities.**

## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Eat a high-fiber diet to keep your stool soft.
- Limit activity.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow.
- Warm baths may be useful to soothe rectal pain.
- Follow up with your caregiver as directed.

## SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop increased bleeding.
- You have black or dark red stools.
- You vomit blood or material that looks like coffee grounds.
- You have abdominal pain or tenderness.
- You have a fever.
- You feel weak, nauseous, or you faint.
- You have severe rectal pain or you are unable to have a bowel movement.

## MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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