

The AF patient journey

Your doctor has diagnosed you as having an anal fissure (AF). Here are FAQs about this common condition.

What is an anal fissure?

A small tear in the lining of the anus (back passage)

Who gets them?

Around 1/10 people during their lifetime

What are the different types?

Acute AF:

Heals within a few days or weeks

Chronic AF:

Lasts more than 6 weeks and is harder to heal

What does AF look like?

Acute AF:
Looks like a paper cut, or is oval-shaped

Chronic AF:
A cut with a lump on the skin near the tear

What are some of the main causes?

- Constipation and straining to poop
- Chronic diarrhea
- Childbirth
- Sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) (e.g. herpes, syphilis, HIV)
- Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) (e.g. Crohn's disease)
- Prior anal surgery

What are the symptoms?

Pain

- 90% of anal fissures cause pain
- Usually sharp, tearing, or burning sensation
- Pain usually occurs during pooping (bowel movements)
- May last for minutes or several hours after pooping
- May radiate into the buttocks, upper thighs or lower back

Bleeding

- Bright red blood in your poop, on the toilet tissue or in the bowl after pooping

Itching

- Itchiness around the anus

Always see a doctor to discuss any symptoms and health concerns. Contact a healthcare professional if the symptoms of AF mentioned above don't go away after 7 days and/or you experience any of the following: fever, large amounts of blood coming from your rectum, significant pain in your belly or near your rectum, light-headedness, dizziness, passing out, or losing weight without trying.

Proper treatment of AF is important

Without healing, AF can develop into a vicious cycle of painful muscle spasms and reduced blood flow, which then makes healing more difficult.

Goals of treatment

Relax the muscles
around the anus

+

Improve blood flow to the
area to promote healing

+

Relieve pain

Several effective treatment options are available for AF

Your healthcare provider may discuss one or more of the following options with you:

- Diet modifications, e.g. eat more vegetables, use stool softeners, drink more water
- Sitz bath: sit in a shallow, warm water bath for 10-15 minutes, 2-3 times a day
- Lifestyle tips, e.g. use a bidet after pooping
- Topical ointments/creams from the pharmacy, e.g. petroleum jelly
- Prescription medications
- Surgery



Distributed by:

Seaford Pharmaceuticals Inc.
29-1530 Drew Road, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada
© 2026 Seaford Pharmaceuticals Inc. All rights reserved.

This material is intended for informational purposes only and should not be considered a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

AFC-013 MAR 2026