

ADVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH PERI - ANAL ITCH (PRURITUS ANI)

DIET:

A high fibre diet (consider Benefiber) will change a loose stool into a soft formed one and reduce peri-anal irritation. Reducing the consumption of foods that decrease the time taken for food to pass through the body, such as hot and spicy foods, may be able to help some people.

There is some evidence for reducing coffee/tea, tomatoes, beer, dairy, Cola, citrus, chocolate and grapes.

HYGIENE:

Cleansing after every bowel movement is important in preventing peri-anal itch.

- Cleanse the peri-anal area after every bowel action, and not only when the area becomes itchy.
- Avoid harsh toilet paper. Use baby wipes (eg wet ones).
- Do not "polish" with toilet paper. Dab the area dry - avoid excessive rubbing. Sometimes drying the area with a hair dryer can be useful.
- Avoid liquid soaps and bar soaps. If you wish to use a cleanser, a non-irritant lotion is the best soap substitute, eg Cetaphil, QV soap or Hamilton Cleansing lotion.

PROTECTIVE PREPARATIONS:

Use a thin smear of non - irritant lotion such as Vaseline, or liquid paraffin 20% in Zinc paste. Occasionally prescription lotions with steroids may be necessary.

VENTILATION:

Increasing the ventilation to the peri-anal area reduces the moistness that can lead to the skin becoming soft and more easily damaged.

- Wear cotton underwear only.
- Avoid tight clothing and pantyhose
- Avoid sitting for long periods of time on vinyl seats
- Lose weight if overweight

WORMS:

If you have contact with children, it may be worth having a course of anti-worm therapy such as **Combantrin**.

Avoid scratching as this will make it worse. Don't Overclean.