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**SONOMA VALLEY
SPECIALTY CLINIC**

ANAL FISSURE TREATMENT

There are two common ointments used to treat anal fissures (a cut on your anal sphincter muscle). They are both compounded medications and must be made at a compounding pharmacy. The medication works by relaxing spasm in a band of smooth muscle that encircles the anal canal (internal anal sphincter muscle). Spasm of this muscle is responsible for much of the pain that people with anal fissures experience.

NITROGLYCERINE OINTMENT

To apply the ointment, use a gloved finger or Q-tip to avoid absorption of the medication through the skin of your finger. Dispense a small amount, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Apply the ointment directly to the anus. Do not insert all the way up to the rectum, and it will not work if you paint the medication on the outside skin of the anus. *It must encircle the anal sphincter muscle.* **Apply the medication approximately 10 minutes BEFORE a bowel movement, after a bowel movement, and before bedtime.** In addition, you may use it any time you are in pain as there is no danger from overdose, but the side effects (headache, etc.) may increase with additional usage.

Side effects of the nitroglycerine ointment are light-headedness, dizziness, and headaches. If you experience these side effects, reduce the amount of ointment you are applying. ****Do NOT use nitroglycerin with Viagra (or similar medications) as combined use could cause an unexpected and dangerous drop in your blood pressure.****

NIFEDIPINE OINTMENT

To apply the ointment, use a gloved finger or Q-tip to avoid absorption of the medication through the skin of your finger. Dispense a small amount, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Apply the ointment directly to the anus. Do not insert it all the way up into the rectum, and it will not work if you paint the medication on the outside skin of the anus. *It must encircle the anal sphincter muscle.* **Apply the medication twice daily (morning and night).**

Side effects of the nifedipine ointment are light-headedness, dizziness, and headaches. Some will also report perianal itching. If you experience these side effects, reduce the amount of ointment you are applying.

OTHER:

- A **high-fiber diet** and over-the-counter fiber supplements -PSYLLIUM HUSK POWDER- (25-35 grams of fiber/day) to make stools soft, formed, and bulky.
- Drinking more **water** to help prevent hard stools and aid in healing.
- Warm tub baths (**sitz baths**) for 10 to 20 minutes, a few times per day (especially after bowel movements to soothe the area and help relax anal sphincter muscles).