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PRURITUS ANI THERAPY

1. The basic aim of treatment is to keep the skin of the anal area clean, dry and slightly acid. Try to avoid injury to the skin from excessive wiping or abrasion.
2. When showering or bathing avoid the excess use of soap, especially rubbing the bar on the anal area or rubbing the itching areas with a washcloth. Soap is highly alkaline. The residues collecting in the folds of the skin cause irritation and alter the normal acidity of the skin. **Bathing** rather than showering will keep the anal skin cleaner and less prone to irritation. (see #5 below)
3. After a bowel movement use a wet cotton or tissue to clean the area. A soapless cleaner or lotion may be used on the cotton. Tucks or other moist pads can be used for cleaning, however, do not leave a wet dressing against the anal skin for any protracted time. Pat the area dry. Avoid rubbing with toilet tissue. A hair dryer can be used to help dry the anal skin.
4. A thin cotton pledget drawn off the side of the roll of absorbent cotton must be worn during the day. The pledget should be thin enough so that you are not aware of its presence. Do not use a cotton ball. The cotton can be dusted with baby powder or cornstarch and should be changed frequently. **Apply the pledget directly to the anus.** A sanitary napkin is not appropriate.
5. A tub or sitz bath morning and/or night should be taken.
6. The prescribed cream or lotion should be applied at bedtime following a cleaning and drying routine.
7. Take _____ rounded teaspoons of Metamucil in _____ glass(es) of water or juice daily.
8. Certain items in the diet may be associated with irritation of the bowel, producing mucous or aggravating drainage. They include: citrus fruits and juices, coffee (regular and decaf), in excess of 1 cup a day, beer and alcoholic beverages, nuts and popcorn, milk, and items that you have found regularly to produce “gas” or indigestion.
9. Depending on the control of your symptoms, the management program may be reduced or adjusted.
10. Recurrences are common and to be expected. If you are unable to control your itching or if the situation worsens in spite of following these measures, call or plan to return.

Optional:

If your itching is worse following a bowel movement or there is an “after drainage”, a rectal irrigation may be done using a 3 or 4 ounce bulb syringe and warm water.