Diverticulosis and Diverticulitis Interventions

When a patient is diagnosed with diverticular disease, diet and lifestyle modifications must be made to prevent recurrence and/or exacerbations of the disease. Interventions include eating a diet high in fiber, taking products to soften the stool, reducing intra-abdominal pressure, and exercising. In severe instances, bowel resection may be necessary to remove the affected portion of the intestine.



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Interventions

High Fiber Diet
High Fiber-box
Initially, patients will be NPO or on a clear liquid diet. This allows adequate time for the inflammation in the bowel to subside and for healing to occur. When the patient is well enough to begin eating solid foods again, a diet high in fiber is recommended. Patients may take fiber supplements if their oral fiber intake is not adequate. High fiber foods will increase the bulk of the stool making it easier to eliminate.

Reduce Intra-abdominal Pressure
Down-arrow Abdomen Pressure-gauge
Patients with diverticular disease should decrease intra-abdominal pressure to reduce the risk of diverticula formation or rupture. These individuals should avoid heavy lifting, bending, vomiting, and straining with a bowel movement, if possible.

Stool Softeners
Stool with Soft-serve
Stool softeners should be encouraged to ease passage of stool and to reduce straining with bowel movements.

Exercise
Treadmill
Exercise is an important component of the treatment regimen, because it can promote gut motility in these patients, while also encouraging weight loss in patients who are obese.

Anticholinergics
Ant-tie-cola
Anticholinergic medications may be prescribed to reduce gut cramping or spasms.

Considerations

Antibiotics
ABX-guy
Antibiotics are used to treat patients with signs of infection related to diverticulitis. Typically, antibiotics are given intravenously while in the hospital.

Bowel Resection
Bowel-bowl Surgeon
If a patient develops an abscess or intestinal obstruction, surgery will be performed to manage the complication. Surgery is only performed if the patient’s condition cannot be corrected or resolved by other means.

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