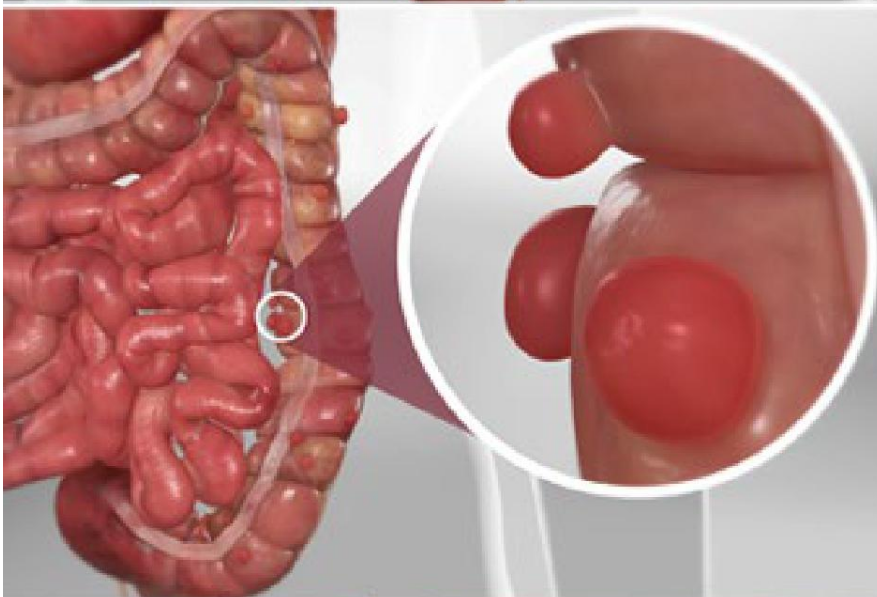
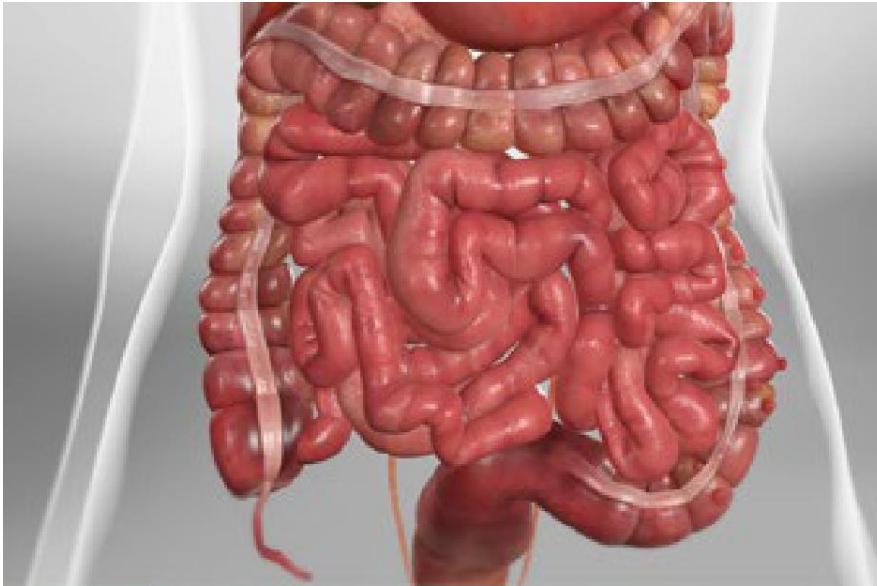




Diverticulitis



Overview

This is an inflammation of one or more small, bulging pouches called "diverticula." They form in weak spots in the wall of your intestines. Most often they're found in your large intestine. When you have these pouches, we say you have "diverticulosis." When they become irritated or infected, you have "diverticulitis."

Causes

What causes this condition? It happens when the diverticula tear. They become damaged, and germs infect them. Your risk for diverticulitis is higher as you get older. It's higher if you're obese, and if you don't get enough exercise. Smoking increases your risk. Eating a lot of animal protein and not enough fiber raises your risk. And certain medications can raise your risk, too.

Symptoms

What are the symptoms? You can have constant pain. Many feel it in the left side of the abdomen. This pain can last for days. You may have fever, nausea and vomiting. You may have constipation. And some have diarrhea.

Treatment

How do we treat it? For those with mild symptoms, a liquid diet for a few days at home may be enough. Antibiotics may help, too. But if the symptoms are severe, you may need to be treated in a hospital. You may need surgery. Your doctor will create a plan that's right for you.