



What Is Diverticulitis?

After experiencing diverticulitis once, there is a 20% chance of getting it again.

1. Introduction

Diverticulitis is the inflammation of irregular pouches (diverticula) that develop in the large intestine. It's most common in individuals over the age of 50. Most people don't have problems with diverticula, but it can cause acute pain and other symptoms once inflamed. Diverticulitis typically starts as an acute condition that rises suddenly and resolves quickly with treatment. However, some people may face recurring episodes or ongoing inflammation.

2. Symptoms

One of the most common symptoms of diverticulitis is pain in the lower left abdomen. Other common symptoms of the condition include:

- + Abdominal pain or tenderness
- + Distended abdomen or palpable colon
- + Nausea and vomiting
- + Fever
- + Changes in stool, such as sudden constipation or diarrhea

3. Diagnosis

During a physical exam, your healthcare provider will carefully examine your abdomen to identify the area causing pain or tenderness. Other tests used to make a diagnosis include:

- + **Blood tests** may be used to check for signs of infection.
- + A **stool or urine test** can help rule out other causes for the symptoms.
- + **CT scans** are used to see the extent of the inflammation and other complications.
- + A **colonoscopy** to investigate inside the colon with a scope.

4. Treatments

Mild diverticulitis without other complications can be treated at home. A healthcare provider may recommend starting a liquid diet and gradually introducing low-fiber solid foods as symptoms improve.

In the case of severe diverticulitis with signs of complications, hospitalization is likely necessary. Some may even need surgery to treat an abscess or persistent bleeding.

While the reason why diverticulitis happens is unclear, healthcare providers suspect that general bowel wellness can help.

Did you know?

Approximately 200,000 people are hospitalized for diverticulitis each year in the United States.

For more information on diverticulitis and supportive resources, please visit [mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org).

References:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diverticulitis/symptoms-causes/>

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/digestive-diseases/diverticulosis-diverticulitis/definition-facts>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/10352-diverticulitis>