

# Itching in the Anus (Pruritus Ani)

Clinic for Surgery and Specialized Medicine (KSM)/Department of Rheumatology, Dermatology, and Infectious Diseases /Skin Diseases

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Document responsible:  
Stina Camilla Gundersen

Approved by  
Jorunn Hagen Rønsen

Approved from:  
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## Brief Description of the Condition

The skin around the anus is exposed to various stressors such as moisture, friction, feces, and naturally occurring bacteria and fungi. These factors can lead to irritation. Sometimes, excessive washing can also cause irritation.

Hemorrhoids can lead to leakage of stool, which may exacerbate the condition. Hemorrhoids should therefore be treated. You can read more about hemorrhoids here: [HelseNorge.no](https://helsenorge.no) - Hemorrhoids.

## What are the symptoms of the condition?

The symptoms include itching in and around the anus, often occurring in episodes, with periods of relief in between. Symptoms may worsen with stress and psychological strain. Various foods can aggravate the condition, including coffee, spicy foods, and citrus fruits.

## How is the diagnosis made?

The diagnosis is made based on medical history. The doctor will typically examine the rectum to rule out any underlying diseases.

## How is the condition treated?

- Avoid consuming foods that may worsen the symptoms.
- Be diligent with hygiene. Gently wipe with toilet paper after bowel movements.
- Wash gently with mild soap or just lukewarm water, and then rinse thoroughly. A handheld showerhead can be helpful.
- Gently pat dry with a towel, avoiding rubbing.
- Apply a thick barrier ointment to the cleaned skin to create a barrier against feces and sweat, such as Inotyl ointment®, Bepathen ointment®, or similar. Cavilon cream® can also be tried.
- If you have significant eczema, it can be treated with a steroid cream for the first 1-2 weeks to reduce irritation. This type of cream requires a prescription.
- Some individuals may benefit from capsaicin (Capsina cream®) for itching. This cream is also prescription-based.
- In cases of severe and persistent symptoms, Grenz ray therapy (soft X-rays) may be tried.

## What is the prognosis?

The condition is chronic, so be prepared for symptoms to return. Even if your skin improves, it is important to continue with preventive measures to avoid recurring itching and irritation.

## Other eHandbook Documents

[Grenz Ray Therapy, Information for Patients.](#)