

# Nipping Pain In The Butt

It is a very personal problem, affecting as many as one in every two persons during their lifetime. It is because of this that many choose to ignore haemorrhoids until the condition becomes unbearable.

Haemorrhoids, or piles, occur when tissues filled with blood vessels form at the junction of the rectum and the anus. This is usually due to the inflammation of veins, and can range from small first-degree piles to troublesome prolapsed piles.

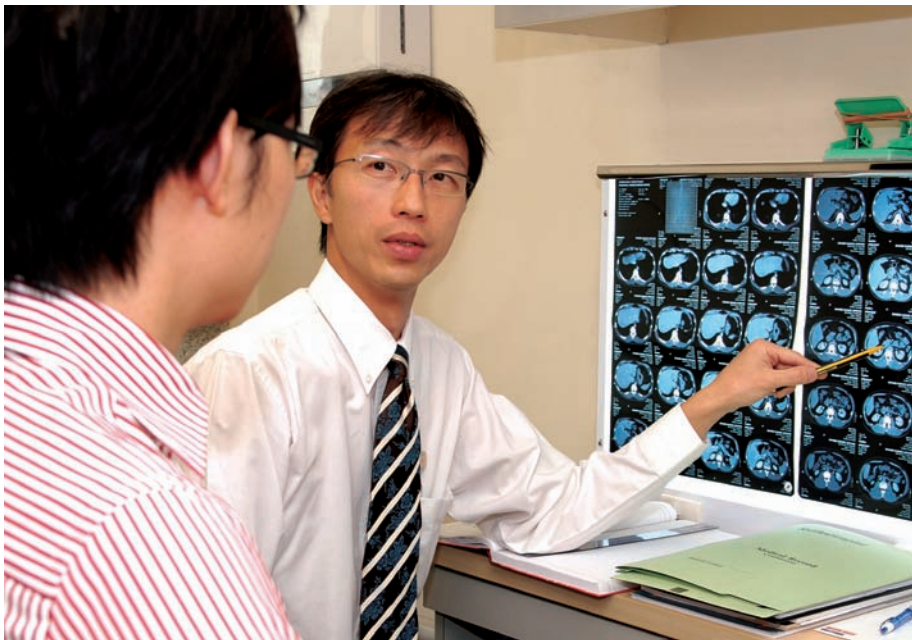
Many methods have been developed to treat bleeding piles, but the current gold standard is stapler haemorrhoidectomy, a quick and virtually painless procedure. However, it does have its fair share of setbacks.



*Prolonged sitting on the toilet seat can cause haemorrhoids*

**Dr. Ng Chin**, Specialist in General Surgery at Raffles Surgery Centre explains, "It remains an expensive procedure costing around S\$5,000, and there are side effects. Some patients experience a sense of urgency and incomplete emptying for up to six months following stapler haemorrhoidectomy."

*Dr. Ng Chin, Specialist in Colorectal Surgery is one of the few surgeons in Singapore who perform Ligasure Haemorrhoidectomy.*



At Raffles Hospital today, a relatively new surgery has shown promising results. Known as ligasure haemorrhoidectomy, this method fuses vessels together to form a seal. Using the same principles as a traditional haemorrhoidectomy, piles are isolated and the feeding vessels are identified.

A ligasure vessel-sealing device is applied across these blood vessels of up to 7 mm in diameter, ensuring that the bleeding is stopped completely and that there is no further blood loss. The ligasure device has been widely used in hepato-biliary (for liver, bile ducts and gall bladder) and laparoscopic (minimally invasive) surgery.

“Studies have shown that this procedure is most beneficial for the treatment of haemorrhoids. Not only does it take less than 15 minutes to perform, but there is also hardly any blood loss and no open wounds. It is also cheaper than doing a stapler haemorrhoidectomy,” stresses Dr. Ng, who is one of the few doctors in Singapore who can perform this surgery. To date, he has performed hundreds of ligasure haemorrhoidectomy procedures.

Ligasure haemorrhoidectomy is ideal for patients who have put off piles surgery for fear of pain, or who find stapler haemorrhoidectomy too expensive. Not one to rest on his laurels, Dr. Ng is determined to perfect the procedure further for the benefit of his patients. “As we do additional work on the technique, we believe the current tolerable level of pain can be decreased even more,” he enthuses.

## Ligasure Haemorrhoidectomy Procedure



*The surgeon uses instruments to hold the pile away from the skin.*

Step. 1



*Using the ligasure instrument, the device fuses the collagen and elastin resulting in a perfect seal.*

Step. 2



*The seal allows the surgeon to then cut away the pile without any blood loss.*

Step. 3



*The process is repeated until the entire pile is removed completely.*

Step. 4



*The pile is cleanly removed without any damage to the surrounding structures.*

Step. 5