

Rectal Discharge

Discharge from the rectum most commonly shows itself as the appearance of mucus or pus wrapped around the outside of an otherwise normal bowel motion in the toilet bowl. It may also show itself as a constant feeling of dampness around the anal opening, stains on the underclothing, or as the feeling of wanting to open the bowels with the passage of only small amounts of mucus or pus-like liquid rather than normal faeces.

Any person with rectal discharge should see their local doctor or sexual health clinic. There are many causes of rectal discharge – these can be investigated and treated.

Practical Advice

Rectal discharge could be due to an infection of the rectum associated with sexual activity. The rectal discharge may or may not be associated with pain and discomfort. Causes include:

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhoea
- Herpes simplex.

Chlamydia and gonorrhoea infections of the rectum are not usually painful, but herpes infection of the anus and rectum is usually quite uncomfortable. In men who have sex with men, bacteria from the gut can also cause infection of the rectum.

Other Resources

[Queensland Health Sexual Health website](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/sexual-health) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/sexual-health>)

Related Content

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- [Genital Herpes](#) (/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/138/Sexually-Transmitted-Diseases/245/Genital-Herpes) fact sheet
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