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Diverticulosis and Diverticulitis

Diverticula are small, bulging pouches that can form anywhere in your digestive system, including your esophagus, stomach and small intestine. However, they're most commonly found in the large intestine.

Diverticulosis or diverticular disease happens when these small pouches bulge outward through the colon. You may not know you have these pouches and they might not cause any symptoms. The condition; however, can cause mild cramps, bloating or constipation. Maintaining a high-fiber diet and medication to reduce colon spasm, will often relieve these symptoms.

Diverticulitis occurs when one or more diverticula in your digestive tract become inflamed or infected. Depending on the acuteness of the symptoms, mild cases of diverticulitis can be treated with rest, changes in your diet, and antibiotics in order to prevent further complication. Serious cases of diverticulitis can cause severe abdominal pain, usually on the left side. If the diverticula are infected; then fever, nausea, vomiting, chills, cramping or constipation can signal immediate medical attention. Diverticulitis can lead to bleeding or blockages or even perforation (puncture) through the bowel wall. Serious cases of diverticulitis may require surgery.