

Rectal Prolapse

What Is Rectal Prolapse?

Rectal prolapse occurs when the lowest part of the bowel (rectum) telescopes on itself and protrudes through the anus. This condition is usually caused by pelvic floor weakness, which may also lead to other forms of prolapse, such as uterine prolapse or cystocele in women.

Who Is At Risk?

- **Women** – Childbirth is a major contributing factor to pelvic floor weakness
- **Men and women** – Chronic straining during bowel movements can increase the risk
- **Rare cases** – Malnutrition may contribute to rectal prolapse development

Symptoms Of Rectal Prolapse

If you have rectal prolapse, you may experience:

- A **lump protruding from the anus**, often during bowel movements
- A **prolapse that reduces on its own** or needs to be pushed back manually
- **Mucus discharge or rectal bleeding**
- **Loss of bowel control** (stool leakage), especially as the prolapse increases in size and stretches the anal muscles

How Is Rectal Prolapse Diagnosed?

A specialist assessment is required to confirm that the prolapse is the cause of your symptoms. Diagnosis may include:

- **Flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy** – To check for other bowel conditions
- **Transit study** – If **chronic constipation** is a concern
- **Video proctogram or examination under anaesthetic** – Used when the prolapse is difficult to detect in the clinic
- **Anorectal physiology testing** – Assesses the function of anal sphincter muscles
- **Endoanal ultrasound scan** – Checks for muscle damage in the anal region

Treatment For Rectal Prolapse

Surgical options

For most patients, surgery is the recommended treatment. There are two main types of surgery:

Perineal approach (performed from below)

These procedures are typically recommended for less fit patients and involve removing or fixing the prolapsed rectum via the perineum. Options include:

- **Delorme's procedure** – Used for smaller prolapses
- **Altemeier procedure (perineal rectosigmoidectomy)** – Suitable for larger prolapses

Abdominal approach (performed from above)

These procedures reposition and secure the rectum from inside the abdomen. They are often performed laparoscopically (keyhole surgery) and offer better long-term results. Techniques include:

- **Rectopexy** – Fixes the rectum in place to prevent future prolapse
- **Ventral mesh rectopexy** – Uses mesh support to reinforce the rectal wall

Why Choose The Midlands Bowel Clinic?

- **Expert colorectal surgeons** with extensive experience in rectal prolapse treatment

- **Advanced diagnostic tools**, including videoproctogram and anorectal physiology testing
- **Minimally invasive surgical options** for faster recovery and better outcomes
- **Personalised treatment plans** tailored to each patient's condition

Contact Us

If you are experiencing rectal prolapse symptoms, stool leakage, or discomfort, contact us today to explore diagnosis and treatment of Form