



HouseCalls

House Calls with Dr. De La Flor

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Dear Doctor

Dear Doctor De La Flor,

My doctor told me I may have diverticulitis, I'm nervous while waiting for the test. What exactly is it and is it dangerous?

SINCERELY,
DEBBIE

Dear Debbie,

There are two key words; fibre and pouch. We think that a low-fibre diet may play a major role since without fibre to add bulk to the stool, the colon has to work harder than normal to push the stool forward. The pressure from this may cause pouches to form in certain weak spots along the way!

Diverticulitis happens when bacteria get trapped in the pouches. Most of the times there are complaints of belly pain (usually in the lower left side). You may also have bloating and gas; diarrhoea or constipation; nausea and sometimes vomiting; fever and chills; loss of appetite.



Your doctor may do tests to see if you have an infection or to make sure that you don't have other problems. Tests may include blood tests, such as a complete blood count and other tests, such as an x-ray, a CT scan,

or a colonoscopy.

The treatment you need depends on how bad your symptoms are and whether you have an infection. You may need to switch to a liquid only diet at first, and then return to solid food

when you start feeling better. If you have an infection, your doctor may prescribe antibiotics. For mild cramps and belly pain a heating pad, set on low may help your belly feel better.

You may need surgery only if diverticulitis doesn't get better with other treatment, or if you have problems such as long-lasting (chronic) pain, a bowel obstruction, a fistula, or a pocket of infection (abscess).

Dear Doctor

After years of frustration, I finally was told that I have celiac disease. I've started to follow a gluten-free diet, but want to know if it will really make a difference. How will I know if it's working and what kinds of symptoms should I be aware of?

SINCERELY,
BRENDA

Dear Brenda,

Celiac disease is a very serious condition if left undiagnosed or untreated.

My advice is to continue with the gluten-free diet and go back to your GP to confirm the improvement of any side effects caused by this condition. If you continue with problems, your GP should run a few more tests (including blood antibody tests).

There are two categories of signs and symptoms. The one due to malabsorption and the one due to malnutrition (including vitamin and mineral deficiencies).

Most of the gastrointestinal symptoms and signs of celiac disease are due to the inadequate absorption of fat; diarrhea, malodorous flatulence, abdominal bloating, and increased amounts of fat in the stool. Fatty stools typically are large in volume, malodorous, greasy, light tan or light grey in colour, and tend to float in the toilet bowl. Oil droplets (from undigested fat) also may be seen floating on top of the water.

Loss of intestinal villi also causes malabsorption of carbohydrates, particularly the sugar lactose (primary sugar in milk). You can have diarrhoea, excessive flatulence, abdominal pain and abdominal bloating or distension may occur.

Signs and symptoms of

malnutrition and vitamin or mineral deficiencies include weight loss, fluid retention, anemia, osteoporosis, bruising easily, nerve damage, infertility, and muscle weakness or cramps as well as numbness or tingling sensations in the arms and legs. Weight loss is the direct result of inadequate absorption of carbohydrates, proteins and fat. However, some have enormous appetite that compensates for the reduced absorption of nutrients. Moreover, weight loss can be masked by fluid retention and eventually fluid leaks into many tissues but particularly the ankles and feet, which swell due to the oedema.

Dr. De La Flor, G.P. is licensed in medicine & general surgery. He holds certificates in nutrition, medical exercise and human performance from the University of Berkeley in California, the American Council on Exercise and the U.S. National Strength & Conditioning Association. He is a strong believer in work/life balance and spends much of his time outside of his surgery on the tennis court, jogging or chasing his four kids around the neighbourhood. 00-34 - 697.888.666

The Canary Islands were chosen as the first Spanish venue to celebrate European 112 Day on February 11th. Last year the host country was the Czech Republic.

Canarian government president Paulino Rivero presided over the event which took place at the Auditorio Alfredo Kraus in Las Palmas. Also attending were the presidents of the Fundación 1-1-2, Mike Amarosa, and of the E-911 Institute (the emergency number in the United States), Gregory Rodhe, and the executive director of the European Emergency Number Association (EENA), Gary Machado.

In his speech, Rivero emphasised that, "for Canarians on the seven islands and for the tourists who visit us, 112 has become an indispensable service". He added that the management

of the emergency services must take steps towards technological development, cooperation between worldwide emergency centres and the exchange of new processes.

The European representatives underlined the importance of educating the general public regarding use of 112 and Machado said that national and regional governments needed to continue promoting 112 and spreading knowledge about the service. On the same day, the European Commission revealed that only one in four Europeans are aware that they can use the 112 number in other EU countries. Actions to promote the good use of



112, the free emergency phone line for police, fire and ambulance services which is common to the

27 countries within the European Union, were organised on this day in many European cities. In the Ca-

naries, the event was used to present two applications which 112 in the Canaries are to include in their opera-

Las Palmas

European 112 Day

tions rooms, motivated by the future signing of a joint agreement called Proyecto Istmo with the government of Murcia in mainland Spain. The first of these was the 'crewless helicopter', which would provide images of an emergency situation in real time, and the second was 'Mirroreyes', which would enable a video call between the person reporting an emergency and the operations room at 112, also providing images of an emergency scene. The main channel for this would be the latest generation 3G mobile phones.

In this regard, the councillor of the presidency and public administrations of Murcia, María Pedro Reverte stated, "new technology is the key to the future and governments must adapt to social changes with the objective of promoting new systems which will guarantee better security for the public".