

Hypertrophied anal papilla

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Anal papillae occur at the dentate line and are remnants of the ectodermal membrane that separated the hindgut from the proctodaeum. As these papillae are present in 60% of patients examined proctologically, they should be regarded as normal structures. Anal papillae can become elongated in the presence of an anal fissure. Occasionally, an elongated anal papilla may be the cause of pruritus. An elongated anal papilla associated with pain and/or bleeding at defecation is sometimes encountered in infancy. Haemorrhage into a hypertrophied anal papilla can cause sudden rectal pain. A prolapsed papilla may become nipped by contraction of the sphincter mechanism after defecation. Occasionally, a red oedematous papilla is encountered, with local pain and a purulent discharge from the associated crypt. This condition of 'cryptitis' may be cured by laying open the mouth of the infected anal gland and excising the papilla. Troublesome papillae may be simply excised.

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