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## Diverticular Disease

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_ Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

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**I. The client/caregiver can define two types of diverticular disease.**

- A. Diviculosis is a condition in which there are multiple diverticula that are outpouchings of mucosa through a weakened area in the intestinal wall in the lower bowel.
- B. Diverticulitis is the inflammation of diverticula that results when undigested food particles and bacteria become trapped in the diverticula.

**II. The client/caregiver can identify factors that may increase risk of diverticular disease.**

- A. Low-fiber diet
- B. Advancing age
- C. Chronic constipation
- D. Obesity
- E. History of ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease

**III. The client/caregiver can recognize signs and symptoms of diverticular disease.**

- A. Symptoms of diverticulosis include
  - Mild cramps, bloating, and constipation
- B. Symptoms of diverticulitis
  - Abdominal pain
  - Tenderness around the left side of the lower abdomen
  - Fever and chills
  - Nausea and vomiting
  - Cramping
  - Constipation

**IV. The client/caregiver can list measures to prevent or manage diverticular disease.**

- A. Avoid constipation.
  1. Eat a diet high in fiber to prevent constipation after inflammation has subsided (high-fiber diet in therapeutic diet).
  2. Use stool softeners or bulk laxatives as ordered by the physician.
  3. Avoid harsh laxatives and enemas.

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4. Drink at least eight glasses of water per day.

5. Establish a regular time for bowel evacuation.

6. Exercise regularly.

B. Lose weight if necessary (weight-reduction diet).

C. Report any fever, nausea or vomiting, cloudy or foul odor of urine, constipation, or diarrhea to physician.

D. Ask the physician about recommendations for colon cancer screening.

**V. The client/caregiver can list possible complications.**

A. Intestinal obstruction

B. Peritonitis

C. Hemorrhage

D. Perforations

E. Abscess or fistula formation

F. Peritonitis and sepsis

**RESOURCE**

National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse  
E-mail: [nddic@info.niddk.nih.gov](mailto:nddic@info.niddk.nih.gov)

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