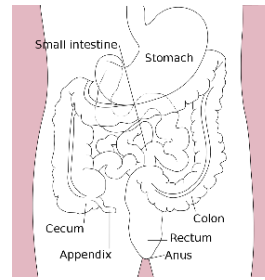
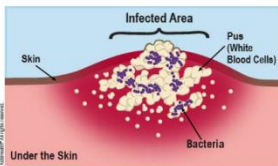


## What is a Fistula in Ano?

It is a tunnel that grows between the end of the digestive tract (the anus) and the skin.



## What is an abscess?



Germs can get into the tunnel and cause an infection. This is called an abscess. An abscess looks like a lump on the skin that is filled with pus. It is a way the body tries to fight an infection. A fistula in ano and abscess often happen together. It is more common in infants younger than one year old.

## What are the symptoms?

Early symptoms are a painful, red lump near the anus. Over time, this lump can get bigger and more painful. This may make it hard for your baby to poop or have a bowel movement.

## How is it diagnosed and treated?

An abscess can be found by a physical exam, since it is near the skin. Antibiotics are often prescribed to clear the abscess. Soaking in warm water also helps the abscess open and drain. This can be done 2 to 3 times per day. Your child's doctor or nurse will give you directions.

Sometimes the abscess will come back at the same place. If this happens, a surgery may be needed to assess for a fistula. A fistula is best diagnosed in the operating room. If a fistula is present, the surgeon will treat it during this operation. This operation is called a fistulotomy.

## Other teaching sheets that may be helpful:

[1255](#) Sedation for procedures

**ALERT:** Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any concerns or if your child has special health care needs that are not covered by this information.

**This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.**