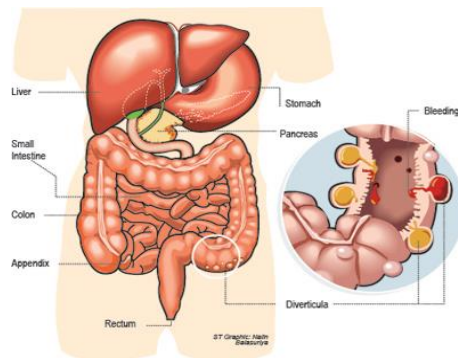


Diet and Diverticular Disease



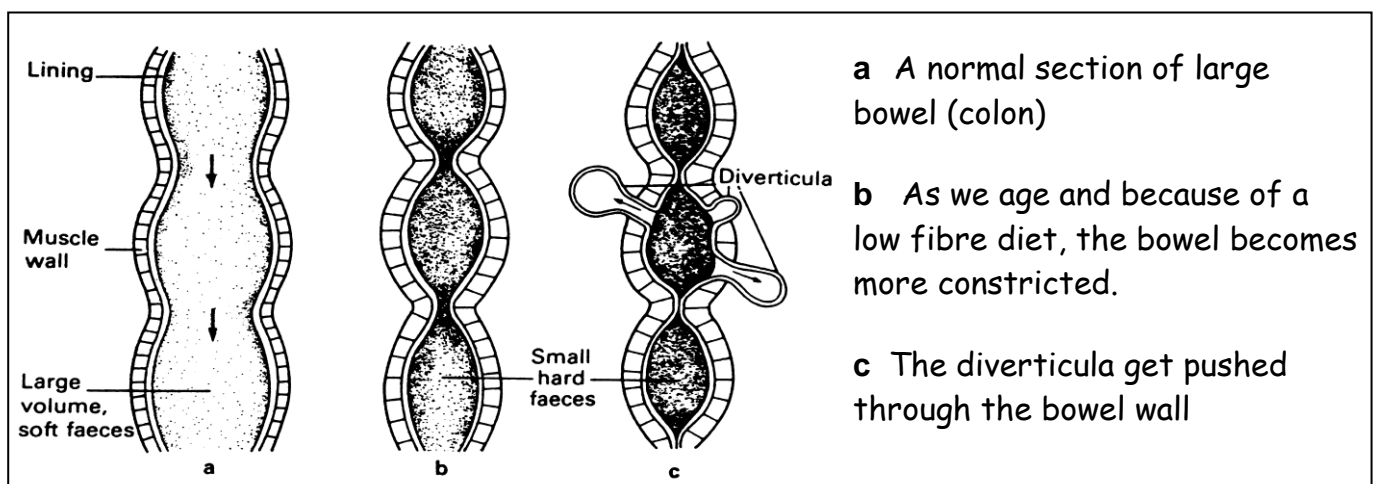
Diverticular disease is very common in the Western world.

The disease is thought to be related to increasing age and lack of fibre in the diet.

The diverticula are small hernias or pockets which push through the wall of the large bowel (colon), infection in these pockets is called *diverticulitis*.

Most people who have diverticular disease **will not have any symptoms**. However, those who do commonly report constipation, vague abdominal pain and flatulence.

The symptoms of *diverticulitis* are abdominal pain, fever and nausea.



a A normal section of large bowel (colon)

b As we age and because of a low fibre diet, the bowel becomes more constricted.

c The diverticula get pushed through the bowel wall

Nutritional Guidelines:

- ❖ **Have** plenty of these high fibre foods to help get your bowel moving :
 - ❖ Wholemeal bread and high fibre cereals eg Weetbix, All bran, porridge etc.
 - ❖ Fresh fruit or dried fruit (particularly prunes).
 - ❖ Salads (watch the seeds) and cooked vegetables with skin on if possible.
 - ❖ Cooked dried peas, beans and lentils, for example baked beans.

- ❖ **Drink** plenty of fluids (6-8 glasses per day). Fibre absorbs water in the large bowel causing it to swell and helping to move the contents of the bowel.

- ❖ **Avoid** nuts and seeds (which may get caught in the pockets and cause pain) such as:
 - ❖ Bread with visible grains (multigrain breads).
 - ❖ Fruit and vegetable seeds, particularly tomato, cucumber, passionfruit.