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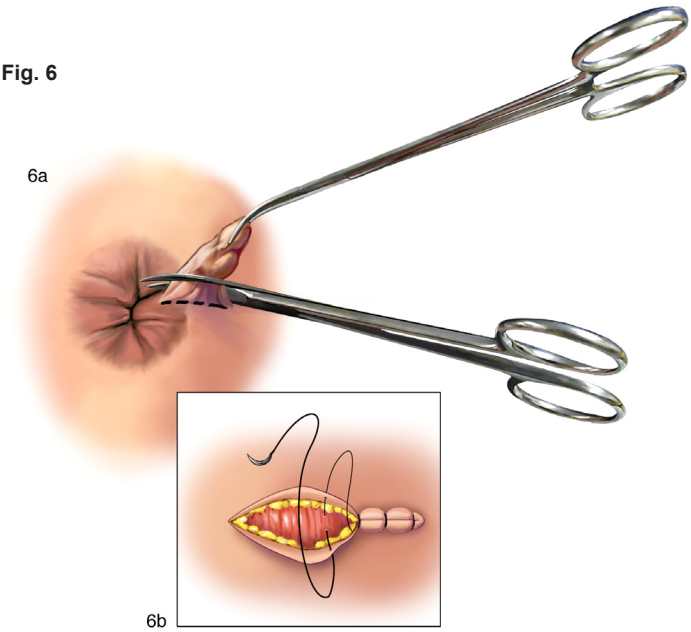
Skin tags

These are the result of repeated thrombosis and resolution (healing) in the external hemorrhoidal plexus leaving a lump of skin often in the left lateral, right anterior and right posterior positions like internal hemorrhoids. They are a cosmetic problem and distress the patient because it takes longer to clean up after a bowel movement or are felt to be ugly. Removal of the tag is best performed under 2% Xylocaine® with adrenaline or with 0.5% Marcaine®. The tag is snipped off with scissors and the wound closed with 2(0) chromic catgut making sure the dead space is obliterated with the skin approximation (figure 6).

Fig. 6



Aftercare: EMLA® cream can be applied as soon as you get home and repeated every 8 hours for pain relief. Alternatively 5% Xylocaine® ointment will work, but needs to be applied every 4 hours. There is a discharge of fluid and a little blood for a few days. You can take a shower for the first 3 days and bath after that, but do not take any pain killing oral medications with codeine – this can constipate you. A small 4 by 4 gauze pad will keep your underwear clean and you can usually work 3 days after the procedure. The stitches are self absorbing and you will be given an appointment for the doctor in 2 weeks.

Infection and problems are rare, but use the contact numbers you have been given if you have trouble.

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