

## **Mesenteric and Visceral Ischemia**

### **What is mesenteric ischemia?**

Mesenteric ischemia occurs when the arteries that supply the small and large intestines become blocked and can not supply oxygenated blood to the intestines.

### **Causes of Mesenteric Ischemia**

1. Atherosclerosis (plaque buildup in the arteries) often causes chronic mesenteric ischemia.
2. An embolus (blood clot) that travels to the mesenteric arteries, cutting off the blood supply, can cause acute mesenteric ischemia.

### **Symptoms of Mesenteric Ischemia**

Symptoms include:

1. Sudden, severe abdominal pain after eating
2. Weight loss
3. Digestive problems including diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, flatulence, or constipation

### **How is mesenteric ischemia diagnosed?**

A Doppler exam is usually performed. If ischemia is suspected then a CTA (computed tomography) scan, or MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) is used to assist in the diagnosis.

### **Mesenteric Ischemia Treatment and Surgery**

Treatment methods for mesenteric ischemia include:

- placement of stent-grafts in the arteries to improve circulation to the intestines
- arterial bypass surgery to increase blood flow

