History

Different Presentations

Bleeding: Although the most common source of a lower GI bleed is colorectal cancer, diverticular disease is the most common cause of hematochezia, or bright red or maroon blood per rectum. Bleeding is typically seen in diverticulosis and not diverticulitis. Diverticula tend to herniated through the weakest spots in the colonic wall, where the penetrating blood vessels enter. As the diverticulum grows out, these vessels will only be separated from the bowel lumen by mucosa, therefore becoming more and more vulnerable to injury and rupture. In the majority of patients the right colon is the source of bleeding, even though, in general, diverticular disease affects the left colon much more commonly. When right-sided diverticula are found, they are almost invariable associated with left-sided diverticula. The propensity for the right-sided diverticula to bleed may be because these usually have wider necks and domes, exposing more of the vasa recta. In addition, bleeding stops spontaneously 75 percent of the time.

References: