

**Office for Genetics  
and  
Children with Special Health Care Needs**

**Rectal/Anal Atresia Fact Sheet**

**What is Rectal/Anal Atresia?**

- It is the absence or closure of the rectum (end of intestine where stool is held) or anus (opening for stool)

**What is the cause of Rectal/Anal Atresia?**

- The defect is caused by abnormal development of the fetus and there are many forms of rectal/anal atresia that are associated with other birth defects

**Signs and Symptoms**

- Missing anal opening or anal opening ending in blind pouch
- Inability to pass stool within the first 24-48 hours after birth

**Is there any treatment for Anal Rectal Atresia?**

- Surgery is needed to reconnect the rectum and anus

## Support Groups/Resources

- March of Dimes  
[www.marchofdimes](http://www.marchofdimes.org)  
1-410-546-2241
- Office for Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs  
<http://fha.maryland.gov/genetics/bdris.cfm>  
1-800-638-8864
- The Parents' Place Of Maryland  
[www.ppmd.org](http://www.ppmd.org)  
410- 768-9100
- VACTERL Association Support Group  
[www.vacterl-association.org](http://www.vacterl-association.org).