

Continence and defecation are two essential functions of the human body. The normal anatomy of the anorectum is well documented in the literature. The data on the physiology of these processes are controversial and sketchy. The article discusses scientific facts that describe the different aspects of the physiology of anorectum. On this basis, the hypothesis of fecal retention and defecation in the form of successive reflex reactions of the rectum, and pelvic floor muscles, including the internal anal sphincter, external anal sphincter, puborectalis muscle, and levator plates, was proposed. This hypothesis allows for explaining the pathophysiology of functional constipation, fecal incontinence, anorectal malformations, etc.