

Haemorrhoidectomy Information

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Author: Ward Manager
Department: General Surgery
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What are haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids are swollen blood vessels, which are found within the lining of the back passage (anal canal). They are often called piles. Some hemorrhoids can emerge from the anus during bowel movement. This is known as a prolapsed hemorrhoid. Some prolapse hemorrhoids can be replaced by being pushed back, others remain permanently prolapsed.

What does the surgery involve?

Haemorrhoidectomy is an operation to remove hemorrhoids. A special device is used so that the surgeon can see the haemorrhoids. They are then removed by cutting them out. The lining is then stitched to the underlying muscle. This may prevent recurrence. Most of the stitches are inside the anal canal and will dissolve over a period of two to four weeks. In some cases the wound is left open to heal. The surgeon may also place a small pack inside the rectum to stem any bleeding. This will either be removed by the nursing staff, dissolve, or will be passed with your first bowel movement.

Post-operation

Immediately after surgery you may also experience some difficulty in passing urine, but this should settle. Occasionally a catheter might be required to empty the bladder.

Are there any alternatives?

A haemorrhoidectomy is generally only recommended when other treatments have not been effective or are not suitable. Other procedures include having a stapled hemorrhoidectomy or trans anal haemorrhoidal de-arterialisation. Your surgeon will discuss your options with you.

Will the haemorrhoids return after surgery?

Haemorrhoids can return after any form of treatment, but they are less likely to return after having a haemorrhoidectomy. If they do return, another haemorrhoidectomy or other forms of treatment may be necessary.

What happens after the operation?

Your blood pressure, pulse and wounds will be monitored closely over the first few hours. You will normally be able to start drinking shortly after the procedure, and can start eating as soon as you are hungry.

You will normally be able to get out of bed a few hours after surgery, although the nurses will assist you the first time. Some pain is to be expected, and can be quite significant. The nurses will give you painkillers and monitor your pain. If an anal plug has been inserted this will usually be removed a few hours after surgery. If a dissolvable anal plug has been used this will be passed on your first bowel movement. A small amount of bleeding is also to be expected.

The nurses will monitor the wound site and if necessary provide pads to protect your clothes from marking. If your operation is planned as a day case, you can go home as soon as the effect of the anesthetic has worn off. A general anesthetic can temporarily affect your coordination and reasoning skills so you will need a responsible adult to take you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours.

During this time, it is also important that you do not operate machinery, drive or make important decisions. Before your discharge the nurse will advise you about your post-operative care and will give you a supply of painkillers and laxatives. Your GP will be notified of your treatment. If a hospital follow-up appointment is required you will be notified of this prior to discharge and the appointment card will be posted to you.

What activities will I be able to do after my surgery?

You can return to normal physical and sexual activities when you feel comfortable.

How much pain can I expect?

At times the pain may be significant, so taking regular painkillers will help. Warm baths may also help reduce the discomfort. You may experience discomfort for up to six weeks after the operation.

Bowel action and personal hygiene

It is important to maintain a regular bowel movement that should be well formed but soft. Continue to take laxatives for two weeks after your surgery. Eating a high fibre diet and increasing your fluid intake will also help. You will normally open your bowels within two to three days of your operation although this may be uncomfortable at first. You may notice blood loss after each bowel movement but this will gradually reduce over the next few weeks.

It is important to keep the operation site clean. If possible, wash after each bowel action for three to four weeks after the operation. Bathing once or twice a day is also soothing and may reduce discomfort. The cut area may take a month or more to heal properly and during this time there may be a slight discharge. Wearing a small pad inside your pants will protect your clothes from staining.

When will I be able to drive?

You must not drive for at least 24 hours after surgery. Before driving you should ensure that you are able to perform an emergency stop, have the strength and capability to control the car and be able to respond quickly to any situation that may occur. Please be aware that driving whilst unfit may invalidate your insurance.

When can I return to work?

You can return to work as soon as you feel well enough. This could depend on the type of work that you do. Typically you will need one to three weeks off work.

Students

There may be students present during your consultation as part of their on-going training. Please let the staff know if you wish to be seen by a doctor only.

Who can I contact if I have a problem when I get home?

If you experience any problems related to your surgery or admission once you have been discharged home. Please feel free to contact the ward for advice from the nurse in charge. They will assist you via the telephone, advise you return to your GP or ask you to make your way to the emergency department at Whiston Hospital depending upon the nature of your concern.

Ward 4A– 0151 430 1420

Ward 4B– 0151 430 1637

Ward 4B – 0151 430 1643

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

 /sthknhs  @sthk.nhs

www.sthk.nhs.uk