

Patient information

Pilonidal sinus surgery

How is the operation performed?

Pilonidal sinuses may be treated in several different ways, all of which remove the 'pits' where hair gets stuck and cause infection. Occasionally, the sinus is very small and can be completely removed followed by closure of the skin with stitches (which are later removed). More often, it is necessary to leave an open wound; the edges of the wound may be partly closed with an absorbable stitch.

Recovery from your operation

Within 1 - 2 hours of your operation, you will be encouraged to get up and walk around. You will be given some painkillers to be taken by mouth as required. A small amount of bleeding or discharge is expected. You should be able to resume normal daily activities rapidly. Provided you feel comfortable, you may lift, drive and go back to work. You should, however, avoid contact sports or other activities which might disrupt stitches in the first 2 - 4 weeks.

Care of the wound

You should have a daily bath or shower to keep the area clean and will need to wear some protection in your underwear until the wound is healed. In order to prevent recurrence of the disease, once healed, the area around the wound should be kept free of hairs, by weekly shaving, hair removal creams or electrolysis.

You may experience some mild to moderate pain afterwards. It is advisable to have a supply of paracetamol and ibuprofen at home.

One of the side effects of taking painkillers can be constipation. To help prevent straining we encourage you to eat a balanced diet with fresh fruit and vegetables

and to drink plenty of fluids. If you are still experiencing problems your local pharmacy will advise on any appropriate short-term medication.

What can go wrong?

Surgical treatment of pilonidal sinus is generally very safe with few risks, but, as with any surgical procedure, complications can occur occasionally. Therefore, in the period following your operation you should contact your General Practitioner, the Colorectal Nurse Specialist or the ward if you notice:

- Severe bleeding
- Increasing pain, redness, swelling or discharge – which may indicate infection

If the surgeon wishes to see you again we will arrange an outpatient appointment. This will be sent to you.

You may need to have stitches removed two weeks after the procedure.

If you have any further questions, please contact our Colorectal Nurse Specialist on 01284 712697 8.00am to 5.00pm.

Or

the Martin Corke Day Surgery Unit on 01284 713050 between 7.45am and 8.00pm Monday to Friday.

Outside of these hours contact the surgical ward F5 on 01284 713262 and speak to the nurse in charge. Please have your hospital number on the discharge letter available.

Or NHS 111

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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