

PATIENT INFORMATION

Open clipping/tying of varicocele: procedure-specific information

What is the evidence base for this information?

This leaflet includes advice from consensus panels, the British Association of Urological Surgeons, the Department of Health and evidence-based sources; it is, therefore, a reflection of best practice in the UK. It is intended to supplement any advice you may already have been given by your GP or other healthcare professionals. Alternative treatments are outlined below and can be discussed in more detail with your Urologist or Specialist Nurse.

What does the procedure involve?

This involves tying or clipping the testicular veins causing the varicocele swelling in the scrotum through an incision in the groin

What are the alternatives to this procedure?

Observation, radiological embolisation, laparoscopic surgery



What should I expect before the procedure?

You will usually be admitted on the same day as your surgery. You will normally receive an appointment for pre-assessment, approximately 14 days before your admission, to assess your general fitness, to screen for the carriage of MRSA and to perform some baseline investigations.

After admission, you will be seen by members of the medical team which may include the Consultant, Specialist Registrar, House Officer and your named nurse.

You will be asked not to eat or drink for 6 hours before surgery and, immediately before the operation, you may be given a pre-medication by the anaesthetist which will make you dry-mouthed and pleasantly sleepy.

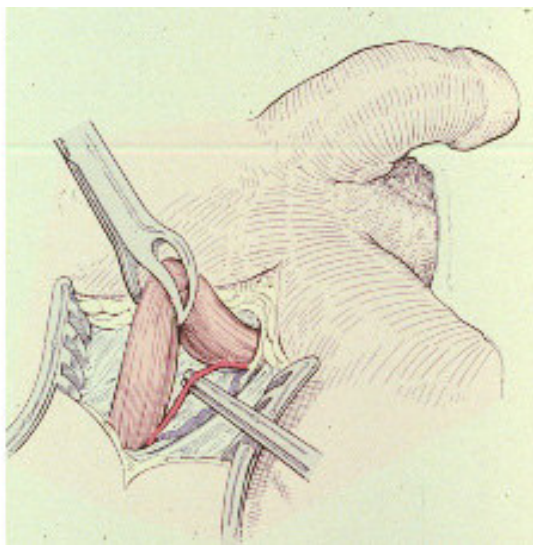
Please be sure to inform your Urologist in advance of your surgery if you have any of the following:

- an artificial heart valve
- a coronary artery stent
- a heart pacemaker or defibrillator
- an artificial joint
- an artificial blood vessel graft
- a neurosurgical shunt
- any other implanted foreign body
- a prescription for Warfarin, Aspirin or Clopidogrel (Plavix®)
- a previous or current MRSA infection

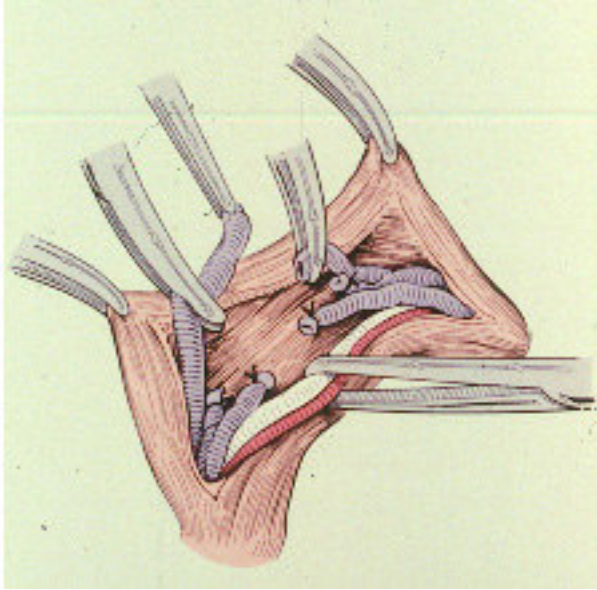
What happens during the procedure?

You will be given an antibiotic to reduce the chance of infection.

Normally, a full general anaesthetic will be used and you will be asleep throughout the procedure. In some patients, the anaesthetist may also use an epidural anaesthetic which improves or minimises pain post-operatively.



The operation is normally performed on the left side through a small incision in or just above the groin. Absorbable sutures are used which do not require removal.



What happens immediately after the procedure?

You may experience discomfort for a few days after the procedure but painkillers will be given to you to take home. Absorbable stitches are normally used which do not require removal.

The average hospital stay is 2 days although, if you feel comfortable, you may be able to return home on the same day as the operation.

Are there any side-effects?

Most procedures have a potential for side-effects. You should be reassured that, although all these complications are well-recognised, the majority of patients do not suffer any problems after a urological procedure.

Please use the check boxes to tick off individual items when you are happy that they have been discussed to your satisfaction:

Common (greater than 1 in 10)

- Swelling of the scrotum lasting several days
- Seepage of yellowish fluid from the wound several days after surgery
- The external appearance of the varicocele may not change significantly although the symptoms are relieved
- Late recurrence of the varicocele (in approximately 14%)
- Development of fluid around the testis several months after the procedure (15-30%)

Occasional (between 1 in 10 and 1 in 50)

- Collection of blood around the testis requiring surgical treatment
- Failure to removal the varicocele completely
- Damage to or shrinkage of the testicle if the blood supply is affected by the operation

Rare (less than 1 in 50)

- Infection of the incision or the testis requiring further treatment

Hospital-acquired infection (overall chance of contracting infection during stay at the West Suffolk Hospital (all wards included)

(obtained from West Suffolk Hospital Infection Control Data June 2009)

- MRSA bloodstream infection (0.0000394 cases per bed day occupancy)
- Clostridium difficile bowel infection (0.0004865 cases per bed day occupancy)

(These rates may be greater in high-risk patients e.g. with long-term drainage tubes, after prolonged hospitalisation or after multiple admissions)

What should I expect when I get home?

It will be at least 14 days before healing occurs; you may return to work when you are comfortable enough and your GP is satisfied with your progress.

The varicose veins above your left testicle may become slightly more prominent initially because they thrombose after the surgery. Once things have settled, they will become less obvious. Do not, however, expect the veins to disappear completely because they rarely do so.

When you leave hospital, you will be given a “draft” discharge summary of your admission. This holds important information about your inpatient stay and your operation. If, in the first few weeks after your discharge, you need to call your GP for any reason or to attend another hospital, please take this summary with you to allow the doctors to see details of your treatment. This is particularly important if you need to consult another doctor within a few days of your discharge.

What else should I look out for?

If you develop a temperature, increased redness, throbbing or drainage at the site of the operation, please contact your GP.

Are there any other important points?

A follow-up outpatient appointment will be arranged for you some 6-8 weeks after the operation. You will receive this appointment either whilst you are on the ward or shortly after you get home.

Is there any research being carried out in this field?

There is no specific research in this area at the moment but all operative procedures performed in the department are subject to rigorous audit at a monthly Audit & Clinical Governance meeting.

Who can I contact for more help or information?

- Uro-Oncology Nurse Specialist 01284 712735
- Urology Nurse Practitioner for 'haematuria clinic', chemotherapy & BCG therapy 01284 712806
- Urology Nurse Practitioner for prostate (transrectal) ultrasound clinic, erectile dysfunction clinic 01284 713229
- Urology Nurse Practitioner for prostate assessment clinic, self catheterisation clinic 01284 713229

Other contacts

Chaplaincy - Telephone: 01284 713486

What should I do with this form?

Thank you for taking the trouble to read this information sheet. If you wish to sign it and retain a copy for your own records, please do so below.

If you would like a copy of this form to be filed in your hospital records for future reference, please let your Urologist or Specialist Nurse know.

I have read this information sheet and I accept the information it provides.

Signature.....Date.....