

UNSTITCHED

If the wound has not been stitched the next day the dressings are soaked off in a bath of warm water. A new dressing is placed over the wound and held in place by underpants. You will usually be able to go home a day or two after the operation. Each day you must remove the dressing, have a bath and apply a new dressing. There may be a bloody discharge for a day or two, but the discharge will then become yellow. You will be seen regularly at the consulting rooms by both the doctor and the nursing staff to see that the wound is healing well. It is important to keep the surrounding skin shaved for you.

Sick notes

Please ask your surgeon for any sick notes or certificates that you may require.

Driving

You can drive as soon as you can drive safely without discomfort in the wound, i.e. after about 2 weeks.

What about sex?

You can restart sexual activities within 2 to 3 weeks, when the wound is comfortable enough.

Work

You should be able to return to light work within 2 weeks and a heavy job within 3 to 4 weeks.

Complications

Complications are seldom serious. Delayed healing is the main problem. There may be a recurrence in about 10% of cases

If you think that all is not well, please ask the nurses or doctors.

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PILONIDAL SINUS

Your Pilonidal Sinus Operation - Some Information

These notes give a guide to your stay in hospital. They also give an idea about what it will be like afterwards. They do not cover everything. If you want to know more, please ask.

What is a Pilonidal Sinus?

A pilonidal sinus is a condition caused by small hairs collecting under the skin between the buttocks. It is treated by removing the affected skin and involved tissue and closing the resultant defect with stitches. If there is associated infection or an abscess it may be dangerous to close the wound and it is then left open and allowed to heal up over a period of 4 to 10 weeks. The length of time taken for healing depends on the size the wound. If the wound is left open it may require daily dressings initially. These will be arranged for you.

WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE THE OPERATION?

Reception

When registering at reception your medical aid details will be required. Your medical aid may require that you obtain an authority number from them for the hospital. Please check this. If you are not on a member of a medical aid you will be required to pay a deposit or to sign an indemnity form. As far as possible we will try to advise you about hospital costs before your admission.

Welcome to the ward

You will be welcomed to the ward by the nurses or the receptionist and will have your details checked. Some basic tests will be done such as pulse, temperature, blood pressure and urine examination. You will be asked to hand in any medicines or drugs you may be taking, so that your drug treatment in hospital will be correct.

Please tell the nurses of any allergies to drugs or dressings. The surgeon will have explained the operation and you will be asked to sign your consent for the operation. If you are not clear about any part of the operation then read this again and then ask for more details from the surgeon or from the nurses.

Visit by the anaesthetist

The anaesthetist who will be giving your anaesthetic will interview and examine you. He will be especially interested in chest troubles, dental treatment and any previous anaesthetics you have had.

Diet

You will have your usual diet until 6 hours before the operation when you will be asked to take nothing by mouth. This will let your stomach empty to prevent vomiting during the operation.

Shaving

The operation area will be shaved to remove excess hair.

Timing of the operation

The timing of your operation is pre-arranged so that the nurses will tell you when to expect to go to the operating theatre. Do not be surprised, however, if there are changes to the exact timing.

Transfer to theatre

You will be taken on a trolley to the operating suite by the staff. You will be wearing a cotton gown, rings will be fastened with tape and removable dentures will be left on the ward. There will be several checks on your details on the way to the operating theatre where your anaesthetic will begin.

The operation is then performed

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE OPERATION

Coming round after the anaesthetic

Although you will be conscious a minute or two after the operation ends, you are unlikely to remember anything until you are back in your bed on the ward. Some patients feel a bit sick for up to 24 hours after operation, but this passes off. You will be given some treatment for sickness if necessary.

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unlikely to remember anything until you are back in your bed on the ward. Some patients feel a bit sick for up to 24 hours after operation, but this passes off. You will be given some treatment for sickness if necessary.

Will it hurt?

There is discomfort on moving rather than severe pain. You will be given injections or tablets to control this as required. Ask for more if the pain is still unpleasant. By the end of one week the wound should be virtually painfree.

Drinking and eating

You will be able to eat and drink normally as soon after the operation as you wish. Occasionally there is some nausea after the anaesthetic.

Opening bowels

It is quite normal for the bowels not to open for a day or so after operation. After a few days a laxative is given if you are uncomfortable.

Passing urine

It is important that you pass urine and empty your bladder within 6-12 hours of the operation. If you find using a bedpan or a bottle difficult, the nurses will assist you to commode or the toilet. If you still cannot pass urine let the nurses know and steps will be taken to correct the problem.

Sleeping

You will be offered painkillers rather than sleeping pills to help you to sleep. If you cannot sleep despite the painkillers please let the nurses know.

The wound

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The wound has a dressing, which may show some staining with blood in the first 24 hours. The wound is held together by stitches which are removed after 8-10 days. The dressing is usually removed after 1-3 days and replaced. This dressing is usually waterproof allowing you to shower. A plastic drain is used to drain excessive secretions from the wound. It may be slightly uncomfortable but is removed after a few days. After 7 to 10 days, slight crusts on the wound will fall off. Occasionally minor matchhead sized blebs form on the wound line, but these settle down after discharging a blob of yellow fluid for a day or so.