

Patient information factsheet

Recovering well after a vaginal repair operation

We have given you this factsheet because you have had a vaginal repair operation. It explains what to expect after your operation and how you can help your body to recover well. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you might have. If you have any other questions or worries, please do ask. We will be happy to help.

Common symptoms after a vaginal repair operation

Pain and discomfort

You may have some abdominal (tummy) discomfort or backache for a few days after your operation. Use over-the-counter pain relief, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. Always read the label or instructions before taking medication.

You can take your next dose of pain relief at: (time)

Vaginal bleeding and discharge

You may have vaginal bleeding for two to three weeks after your operation. Use sanitary pads during this time. Avoid using tampons because they can increase the risk of infection.

You may also have some vaginal discharge for up to six weeks. If this becomes thick or offensive smelling, contact your GP or 111, as this could be a sign of infection.

When to seek medical advice

Most women recover well after a vaginal repair operation, but as with any operation, there can sometimes be complications.

Contact Bramshaw Women's Unit on 023 8120 6035 (up to two weeks after your operation) **or contact your GP or NHS 111 if you experience:**

- increasing abdominal (tummy) pain
- a temperature (fever)
- a loss of appetite and vomiting
- difficulty passing urine (peeing), burning or stinging when passing urine, passing urine frequently or retention of urine
- a painful, red, swollen, hot leg or difficulty bearing weight on your legs (this may be caused by a deep vein thrombosis (DVT))

Recovering from your operation

Side effects from the anaesthetic

For the first 48 hours after having a general anaesthetic, you may feel more sleepy than usual and your judgement may be impaired.

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For 48 hours after having the anaesthetic, do not:

- drive
- drink alcohol
- work
- exercise
- handle machinery (including an oven or hob)
- sign any legal documentation

Rest and exercise

At first, you will need to get plenty of rest after your operation. You can do some gentle walking straight away. This will help with your recovery and help to prevent blood clots. It is important that you start to reintroduce daily activities gradually over the next days and weeks. Avoid any heavy lifting and strenuous housework for four to six weeks, as this can affect how your wounds heal internally.

Wound closure

Your stitches will be out of sight and dissolvable so you do not need to get them removed. Don't worry if you notice part of a stitch come away. This is normal and no cause for concern.

Diet and fluids

You can eat and drink as normal.

Washing

You can have a bath or shower the day after your operation. Because you have had a general anaesthetic, you might feel dizzy, so please have an adult around to help you. If needed, leave the door unlocked.

Sex

You will have a check-up appointment after six weeks to check that your scars are fully healed. As long as you feel comfortable, you can have sex after this check-up.

Bowel movements

Your bowels may take time to return to normal after surgery. It's important to avoid constipation, so drink plenty of fluids and eat foods that are high in fibre. We may recommend that you take a mild laxative to begin with.

Driving

It can take two to four weeks before you are able to drive again. You must make sure you are able to perform manoeuvres comfortably and make an emergency stop. Check with your insurance company before you start driving again, as each insurance company may be different.

Useful links

www.rcog.org.uk (Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists)

Contact us

If you have any questions or worries, please call Bramshaw Women's Unit on **023 8120 6035**.

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