

Miscellaneous Minor Procedures



**Women and Children
Gynaecology**
Patient Information

Even if your surgeon has explained to you what the operation entails many of us do not take in everything mentioned in the clinic, so this booklet is to help you understand your condition and the reason for the intended treatment.

As we are all different, it is not possible to personalise this information, so there may be differences between your individual case and the information given here.

If you have any queries regarding the information please discuss them with the consultant or a member of his/her team (doctors or nursing staff).

Information

Nowadays, many women have all of their gynaecological investigations and their minor treatments in the outpatients department.

However, it may sometimes be necessary for patients to be admitted into hospital in order to have their treatment in theatre 'under anaesthetic' so that the consultant can carry out tasks that may prove too prolonged or uncomfortable if performed whilst the patient is awake.

The following information is for women having their minor surgery in a theatre at The James Cook University Hospital or at the Friarage Hospital.



What types of operation may be performed under general anaesthetic with the Gynaecology Oncology team?

Although your consultant will have discussed your operation with you, we have tried to list below as many minor procedures as possible:

- EUA (examination under anaesthetic)
- Cystoscopy
- Cervical Dilatation
- Treatment of Vaginal / Vulval Lesion
- Surgery to Labia

Are there any complications or risks associated with minor operations performed under general anaesthetic?

We know there may be complications following various Gynaecological operations or procedures, that are not particularly serious but do happen more often.

These frequently occurring risks include: Pain, bruising, scarring of the skin, scar tissue inside (adhesions), urinary frequency / loss of control, mild infection, fatigue / tiredness.

Are there any more 'serious risks'?

It is also known that more serious risks are present in certain circumstances in our operations. These risks are rare but are significantly increased in those patients who smoke, are obese, have underlying medical problems, and if there are very large fibroids or scar tissue from previous surgery to the womb or cervix (neck of the womb). The more serious risks are as follows:

Infection ... This may occur in the pelvis, bladder, incision site or in the chest. Infections are usually easily treated with antibiotics but occasionally an abscess may form which may require surgical drainage under anaesthetic. Patients are encouraged to follow the recommended post-operative breathing exercises (in the back of this booklet) and to reduce or stop smoking if possible.

Bleeding ... This may occur during the operation or, rarely, afterwards and may be sufficient to require a transfusion.

Visceral injury ... This is essentially injury to the bowel, bladder, neck of womb (cervix) or the womb (uterus). This type of injury is very rare, the risk being increased if there are very large fibroids or if there is scar tissue present from previous operations. If there is a visceral injury, then it may need to be repaired by laparotomy. This would involve an abdominal incision and a longer stay in hospital. These complications would usually be found during the operation and dealt with immediately. In rare cases the problem may not become apparent for a few days after the hysteroscopy and it may be necessary to have a second operation to resolve the problem.

Two in every 100 women have a perforation injury (a small hole in the womb).



Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) ... following minor surgery, it is very rare but possible, for clots of blood to form in the deep veins of the legs and pelvis. If this does occur, a deep vein thrombosis would cause pain and swelling in a leg and can be treated relatively simply with drugs. The risk of developing a DVT is minimal, as many precautions are taken to help prevent and minimise the risks. These include reduction of smoking in the weeks before your operation, the use of special equipment in the operating theatre and if you have any medical indications (such as a previous DVT yourself, or family history of DVT we would also use support socks or sometimes medication to thin the blood.

Pulmonary Embolism ... once again it is very rare but possible for a clot to break away and be deposited in the lungs or heart. If this occurs it is a serious situation and will need immediate treatment with drugs. The precautions against pulmonary embolism are the same as for DVT.

There may be failure to gain entry into the womb.

Failure to see the uterine cavity (the inside of the womb)

All operations carry some risk of death.

If you do have any concerns about the risk of complications, please discuss them with the consultant or a member of his/her team (doctors or nursing staff) and your questions will be answered as clearly and as honestly as possible.

What happens before the operation?

You will most likely receive a pre assessment appointment with the nurse who will fill in some medical forms and record your weight, height, pulse and blood pressure.

Depending on your general health and age, some blood samples and further tests may be needed such as a heart tracing (ECG - Electrocardiogram), a chest x-ray or a lung function test. You may also need to see a doctor who may listen to your chest and take a more detailed history of your medical problems for the Anaesthetist. You will already have had your operation explained to you by your consultant so he/she is not usually involved in the pre-assessment and there is not usually any need for an internal examination. You will however, have the opportunity to ask the nurse any questions you might have.

Your anaesthetist would prefer you to stop, or at least reduce, cigarette smoking in the weeks before your operation as smoking is known to increase the risk of anaesthetic complications, for example breathing difficulties, coughing, nausea & sickness and chest infection.

To reduce the possibility of skin infection, we request you do not shave your bikini-line during the week before your operation.



Admission into hospital

Do not have anything to eat or drink as instructed in your admission letter. Do not suck sweets or chew gum. As you will be admitted on the day of your operation, you will need to take a bath or shower at home and take off as much of your jewellery as possible although we are able to cover wedding rings/bangles if you are unable to remove them. Please remove false nails and any nail varnish from your hands and feet. To reduce the possibility of any damage to your eyes, it is very important you remove all mascara and wear glasses instead of any type of contact lenses. Please wear comfortable clothes that are not tight around the waist.

You will need to bring a packet of sanitary towels into hospital with you, dressing gown and slippers, plus any medications that you are currently taking. You may also choose to bring in a book or magazine.

Please be aware that South Tees Acute Hospitals Trust cannot be held responsible for any personal belongings, valuables or money you bring in with you.

Partners or friends may come in to drop you off but unfortunately we do not have the facilities to let them stay with you so please bring in the telephone number of the person to be collecting you and give it to a member of staff before your operation.

For patient confidentiality, you be asked if you will be expecting any telephone enquiries. If an unexpected enquiry is received, the person calling will be told that you are not present.

If you are unsure, you may phone the nursing staff on the contact numbers at the end of this booklet.

What happens on the day of the operation?

You will be provided with a gown on arrival, then the nurses will advise you to put it on at the appropriate time. If you haven't already signed your consent form for the operation, you will be seen by a member of the surgical team who will explain your operation in detail and answer any questions that you may have.

You will then be required to sign the consent form. Your anaesthetist may also visit you before your operation but if not, you will meet him / her in the anaesthetic room. Any premedication prescribed by the anaesthetist will be given by the nurse. You might need 'support socks' or a small injection of medication to thin the blood to help reduce the risk of a blood clot developing in your legs during the operation. You will then be transferred into the theatre area accompanied by a nurse and / or porter.

What can I expect after the operation?

When the operation is completed you will be woke up by the anaesthetist and transferred to the recovery area where a nurse will look after you and stay with you until he / she is satisfied with your condition.

Surgical Admissions Unit at The Friarage Hospital: You will be taken back into the unit on your theatre trolley. Your condition will be assessed then you will either remain on your trolley until your discharge home, or you will be transferred from your trolley to a reclining chair or a bed.

Surgical Admissions Unit at The James Cook University Hospital: You will be taken back into the unit on your theatre trolley. Your condition will be assessed then you will be transferred from your trolley to a reclining chair or a bed.

Ward 8 at The James Cook University Hospital: You will be taken back to the ward on a trolley then transferred into your bed.

How long can I expect to be in hospital after a minor operation?

Many patients feel well enough to leave hospital about two hours after the operation but you need to stay until you have passed urine. (You will not be allowed to drive yourself home and if you are planning to take a taxi, you will need to be accompanied by a friend or relative.)

You may be required to stay overnight if you have complicated medical problems.

What happens when I go home?

Anaesthetic drugs remain in the body for 24 hours and gradually wear off over this time. If you have nobody with you at home for the first 24 hours, you will need to stay in hospital overnight. Our pre-admission staff will arrange an overnight stay should you need it but if a bed is not available, your operation date may be affected. If you do not have pre-admission, please contact the area you are being admitted to, or contact your gynaecologist's secretary.

As you will be under the influence of drugs it is very important to follow these instructions for 24 hours after your anaesthetic:

- Do have a responsible adult with you in your home.
- Do not drive a car, or any other vehicle, including bicycles.
- Do not operate machinery or appliances such as cookers or kettles.
- Do not lock the bathroom or toilet door, or make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you.
- Avoid alcohol.

- Drink plenty of fluids and eat a light diet, avoiding heavy or greasy foods.
- Take things easy the day after your operation and do not attempt to go to work.
- Do not make important decisions, or sign any important documents for twenty-four hours after your anaesthetic.
- Do not smoke for twenty-four hours after your anaesthetic as it may cause nausea, vomiting, dizziness or fainting

With most of the operations listed in this booklet, you should feel well enough to return to work after two to three days. The staff will give you any specific aftercare advice for your particular operation shortly before you are discharged home but with any minor procedure you may have:

- Some discomfort or bruising in the area of the operation that is usually eased with simple painkillers such as paracetamol or codeine.
- Some discomfort or bruising in the area of your anaesthetic injection that may last for seven to ten days.
- A sore throat for several days.

However, if you have any of the following symptoms, you should contact your GP:

- Vaginal bleeding, which is heavy and fresh, bright red or the passing of clots.
- Pain which is severe and not controlled by your prescribed painkillers.
- A smelly vaginal discharge.
- Feeling unwell, hot and feverish.
- Pain in the calf muscles or chest.

We hope you have found this information helpful. Please remember our staff will be happy to answer any questions you have about any aspect of your care and welcome any comments about this leaflet.

The James Cook University Hospital

Appointments Desk:

01642 854861 / 282714 /
854883

Gynaecology

Outpatients Dept.

(Including Pre-admission Service):
01642 854243

Surgical Admissions Unit:

01642 854603

Ward 8: 01642 854508

Gynae Oncology Nurses

Lynne Wright, Jane McNeil
and Pamela Shield;
01642 282418

The Friarage Hospital

Appointments Desk:

01609 764814

Gynaecology

Outpatients Dept:

01609 764814

Pre-admission Service:

01609 764845 / 01609 763769

Surgical Admissions

Unit Reception: 01609 764847

Nursing Staff: 01609 764657

From 7am Mondays until 5pm
Fridays, Allen POS.D.U.:
01609 764405

From 5pm Fridays until 7am
Mondays, Allerton Ward:
01609 764404

Comments, compliments, concerns or complaints

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is concerned about the quality of care you receive and strives to maintain high standards of health care. However, we do appreciate that there may be an occasion where you, or your family, feel dissatisfied with the standard of service you receive. Please do not hesitate to tell us about your concerns as this helps us to learn from your experience and to improve service for future patients

If you have a concern or question regarding care of the service received, please discuss with / contact a member of the clinical team / matron in the first instance, who may be able to answer your questions without delay. If you feel you cannot discuss your concern with the clinical team, **The Patient Advice and Liaison service** can advise and support patients, families and carers and help sort out problems on your behalf. This service is available, and based, at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital In Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services. Please ask a member of staff for further information.

If you require this information in a different format please contact Freephone 0800 0282451

All information contained in this booklet, as advised by:
The Gynaecology Medical and Nursing Team at The James Cook University Hospital.

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