

Marsupialisation of Bartholin's Cyst

Day Surgery Unit

Surgical Short Stay Unit



Patient information leaflet

What is a Bartholin's Cyst or Abscess?

A Bartholin's abscess or cyst is the result of an infection of the Bartholin's glands or ducts, which are situated on each side of the vaginal opening.

Initially, a reddened swelling appears on the vulva, which causes acute discomfort. During the acute stage an abscess may form. Once the infection subsides, a cyst may develop in the affected area.

How is this treated?

Surgical treatment is known as a 'Marsupialisation' and is performed under general anaesthetic on the Ward. It involves making a cut in the abscess or cyst and attaching the wall of the abscess or cyst to the wall of the vagina. This allows any fluid or pus inside the cyst or abscess to drain away. The edges of the cyst or abscess are sewn back, like the cuffs of a sleeve, to ensure that the area heals from the base upwards.

Are there any alternatives?

A catheter can sometimes be used under local anesthetic to drain the abscess and can be kept in for a week, check with doctors for availability.

Your GP may have already attempted to treat the infection with antibiotics. You may also have been advised to wait and see if the problem resolves itself. If both these options have failed, surgery offers the best course of treatment.

What will happen after my procedure?

What do I do with my wound and stitches?

Keep the area clean as possible by bathing or showering daily. You must dry the area properly – you may find it more comfortable to carefully use a hairdryer on a cool setting. Do not use perfumed bath products or talcum powder until you are fully healed.

You may notice a small amount of bleeding or weeping from your wound site, this may last for a few weeks. Use panty liners or sanitary towels to protect your clothes. You may find it more comfortable to wear loose cotton underpants while you are healing.

If your wound becomes very swollen and painful, or you notice an unpleasant discharge, contact the Ward or your GP for advice.

Will it hurt?

You may have some discomfort in the wound area. Painkillers will be provided as required while you are in the Unit. You are advised to continue taking these until necessary.

Please complete any course of antibiotics you have been prescribed.

When can I drive?

You must not drive for 24 hours following your anaesthetic. After this you may drive when you are able to perform an emergency stop comfortably and safely.

The DVLA advise that you check with your insurance company before driving again.

When can I return to work or normal activity?

You may return to work when you feel able to perform your job properly. However, you are advised not to work on the day following your surgery to allow recovery from the anaesthetic. Avoid swimming for at least two weeks, until you are fully healed.

Can I engage in sexual intercourse?

You are advised to avoid sex until you have healed fully and you feel comfortable.

Do I have a follow-up appointment?

It is not usual to need a hospital appointment after your surgery. However, we advise that you see your own GP in 6 weeks to check the wound site.

If a hospital appointment is required, it will be sent to you.

Reference source

- NHS Choices: www.nhs.co.uk

These notes will not cover everything. If you want to know more, please ask.

Contact details

If you require further advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Day Surgery Unit

Telephone: 01483 406783 (Monday–Friday, 8am–6pm)

Surgical Short Stay Unit

Telephone: 01483 406828 (Monday–Friday, 8am–6pm)

Gynae Outpatients Department

Telephone: 01483 4571122 **ext** 4173 (answerphone, please leave a message)

Out of hours advice:

Call 111 (formerly NHS Direct) www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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