

Anal Fissure and Sphincterotomy

Day Surgery Unit

Surgical Short Stay Unit



Patient information leaflet

What is Anal Fissure?

A fissure is a split in the skin just inside the anus. It can be very painful, especially during the bowel movement, and can bleed. The pain may be made worse by spasm of the anal sphincter muscle.

Are there alternative treatments available?

1. Various ointments, creams and suppositories can be obtained over the counter from the chemist or prescribed by your GP.
2. Lactulose softens the stool and helps ease constipation.
3. Specific ointments to reduce sphincter spasm may be prescribed by your GP.

If these forms of treatment fail to heal the fissure, surgery may be required.

What are the potential risks and complications?

Infection or excessive bleeding may occur following this procedure. If you are worried about your bleeding or discharge, contact the ward or your GP for advice.

It is usual to experience a reduced ability to control wind from the back passage. In most cases this is temporary but there is a small risk of it being permanent.

Any surgery involving the anal sphincter carries a small risk of incontinence of liquid or solid stools.

What does surgery involve?

A small cut is made in the skin adjacent to the anus. The lower part of the inner ring sphincter is then divided.

What happens after your surgery?

How do I care for my wound?

Some bleeding or discharge is normal after this procedure. You will be provided with gauze to place in your underwear to prevent soiling of your clothes.

Have a bath or shower daily and after opening your bowels. Some people find sitting in a warm bath for about 15 minutes very soothing.

Will the operation hurt?

Individuals with a very painful fissure often find that surgery provides immediate relief from the discomfort. However, the anal area may still be tender following surgery, particularly during a bowel movement.

You will be provided with painkillers during your stay on the unit and when you go home.

All medication dispensed by the unit carries a prescription charge, unless you are exempt.

When can I resume activity and exercise?

Over the next few days, you may return to normal activity as comfort allows.

Will I need time off work?

You are strongly advised to take at least two to three days off work to recover from the anaesthetic. You may then return to work when you can perform your job comfortably.

On the day of surgery the unit can provide you with a certificate to resume work.

Can I drive?

You must not drive for at least 24 hours following your anaesthetic. You may resume driving when you feel comfortable and are able to perform an emergency stop comfortably and safely.

Can I engage in sexual intercourse?

You may resume sexual activity when you feel comfortable and able.

When can I eat and drink?

Ensure that you eat a high-fibre diet and drink plenty of fluids (at least two to three pints a day) to help prevent constipation. This will aid healing.

Will I require an outpatients appointment?

If required, a follow-up appointment will be sent to you through the post.

Reference source

- www.nhs.uk/conditions/analfissure
- www.acpgbi.org.uk

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)

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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