

Surgical Termination Of Pregnancy

The procedure

This procedure is carried out under general anaesthetic and takes about ten minutes to complete. It is performed using a plastic tube attached to a suction pump. It may be necessary to insert a special pessary into the vagina. This encourages the cervix to soften to make the procedure easier to perform.

After the procedure

When you wake up you may experience some lower abdominal discomfort rather like period pain, mild painkillers will help with this. Following your operation you will have some bleeding like a period for about a week with light spotting afterwards. Please use a sanitary towel rather than tampons as this reduces the risk of infection. You may be given some antibiotics to take home with you, to reduce the risk of infection. Please avoid all sexual activity whilst you are still bleeding.

What are the risks?

If within the first 48 hours, the bleeding becomes increasingly heavy and you are passing 'clots', or if you have increasing abdominal pain and generally feel unwell, please contact your GP or A&E.

What anaesthetic will be used?

You will meet the anaesthetist before your operation and will have a chance to ask any questions you might have about your anaesthetic.

Blood clot prevention

Without preventative measures, there is a risk of blood clot in the leg (deep vein thrombosis or DVT) in all surgical patients of around 15% - 25%. Please discuss the risks of this particular operation with your surgeon. You will be given additional information about the measures we take to reduce this risk.

Consent

You will be asked to give your consent to this treatment following further discussion with medical or nursing staff. It is important that you understand what is involved and you will have an opportunity then to ask any questions that you might have. A sample of the consent form may be provided for you to read so that you are familiar with the form. Please do not sign this sample – it is for your information only.

Plan ahead for discharge home

If you think you may have any difficulties, please discuss these at your pre-operative assessment appointment. Please ensure that you have asked your nurse or doctor when your expected discharge date will be.

Those patients whose blood group is Rhesus negative will need an injection called anti-D to protect you and the baby in any future pregnancies.

You will need to consider which form of contraception you are going to use, because once your operation has been performed you are able to become pregnant again.

Any physical signs of pregnancy should disappear within a few days but emotionally it may take longer. Feelings of unhappiness, anxiety and guilt are expected and these are quite normal. Please feel free to talk to any member of staff or make an appointment with your GP.

Contact your GP if

- You have severe pain
- You develop a fever
- Your wound appears red and lumpy or starts to leak fluid
- You develop leg pain and swelling, difficulty walking, or if your leg becomes warmer than usual, or reddish / purplish in colour.
- You develop unexplained shortness of breath, chest pain and / or coughing up blood

Further Information

If you require further information or advice please contact the ward you have been on

Ward phone number

Other sources of useful information can be found at:

NHS Direct 0845 4647

NHS Choices <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust website www.hdft.nhs.uk

Patient Experience helpline 01423 555499 (Monday – Friday 9.30am – 4pm). E-mail: thepatientexperienceteam@hdft.nhs.uk

If you require this information in an alternative language or format (such as Braille, audiotape or large print), please ask the staff who are looking after you.