

Fenton's procedure

This leaflet explains more about a Fenton's procedure, including the benefits, risks and any alternatives and what you can expect when you come to hospital.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is a Fenton's procedure?

A Fenton's procedure is an operation to remove scar tissue or an area of constriction around the entrance to the perineum (the skin between the anus and the vagina) and entrance to the vagina.

Why should I have a Fenton's procedure?

Your health professional may recommend this procedure to help relieve pain during intercourse if it is caused by scar tissue.

What are the risks?

As with all procedures there are associated risks. If the procedure does not work it may cause more scar tissue to develop if you are prone to scarring.

There are risks associated with having a general anaesthetic. Potential side effects and complications are explained in the information leaflet **Having an anaesthetic**.

There are also minor risks of bruising, bleeding, infection and pain. These would be short-term and some can be treated with medications if appropriate, for example antibiotics if there is an infection. Postoperative pain can be treated by taking over-the-counter pain killers that you would normally take at home.

Are there any alternatives?

Alternatives to the procedure include: doing nothing, using local anaesthetic creams to help with pain, or perineal massage.

How can I prepare for a Fenton's procedure?

A Fenton's procedure is usually carried out under a general anaesthetic in the Day Surgery Unit (DSU) at St Thomas' Hospital. If this is not the case, the nurse in the pre-assessment clinic will discuss the arrangements with you.

Please bring to hospital any medications that you normally take at home including those you get from your doctor on prescription, medications that you have bought yourself which were not prescribed by your doctor, and any alternative medicines such as herbal remedies.

You must not eat or drink anything for six hours before your operation. It is important that your stomach is empty during your operation to prevent complications if you vomit while you are under anaesthetic. You should have received a copy of our leaflet **Having an anaesthetic** where there is more information about when to stop eating and drinking. If not, please ask for one.

Please follow any further specific guidance given to you during your pre-assessment appointment. Please also see the leaflet **Surgical Admissions Lounges (SAL) and Day Surgery Units (DSU) at Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals** if applicable.

Giving my consent (permission)

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This states that you agree to have the treatment and you understand what it involves.

You should receive the leaflet **Helping you decide: our consent policy**, which gives you more information. If you do not, please ask a member of staff caring for you for a copy.

What happens during a Fenton's procedure?

The area of scar tissue or constriction will be trimmed and stitched.

Will I feel any pain?

You will not feel any pain during the procedure as you will be under a general anaesthetic. When you wake up you may experience some pain which can be treated with pain killers as you would usually take at home.

What happens after a Fenton's procedure?

Please read the leaflet **Having an anaesthetic** about waking up immediately after your operation. Most people wake up in the recovery room. You will stay here until you have recovered enough from your anaesthetic and are ready to go back to the main female lounge of day surgery. You will normally go home the same day if there are no complications. If you do leave the same day after having a general anaesthetic, regional anaesthetic or a local anaesthetic with sedation, you will need to have a responsible person who can escort you home and ensure that you are safe overnight. You will also need to arrange childcare for your children.

What do I need to do after I go home?

You may be sore for the first few days but this will get better. You can take over the counter painkillers as you usually would at home. You may experience some bleeding. If so, please use sanitary towels or panty-liners rather than tampons to minimise the risk of infection.

It is normal for the operation site to feel sensitive and for there to be a small amount of bruising. You will have stitches which are dissolvable. They usually take around two weeks to dissolve.

You can have a bath or shower 24 hours after the procedure. You may find it soothing to have a shower once or twice a day – this will also keep the wound clean.

Please abstain from sexual intercourse for two weeks at least, until the area is healed and you feel comfortable. When you resume it may be useful to use a lubricant.

Will I have a follow-up appointment?

You may have a follow up appointment; if so, a letter will be sent to you in the post.

Appointments at King's

We have teamed up with King's College Hospital in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at King's. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your Fenton's procedure, please contact the McNair Centre on 020 7188 7483, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Out of hours, please contact the Gynaecology Ward at St Thomas' Hospital on 020 7188 2697.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

e: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas'

t: 020 7188 8803 at Guy's

e: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

Become a member of your local hospitals, and help shape our future

Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years. To join:

t: 0848 143 4017

e: members@gstt.nhs.uk

w: www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk

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