

Fenton's procedure

This leaflet explains more about a Fenton's procedure, including the benefits, risks and any alternatives, and also 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 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. These are that the procedure does not work, or that 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 minor risks 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 the 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'. 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**. If not, please ask for one.

You are advised to leave all your valuables such as jewellery, money and credit cards at home as although there are lockers on the DSU, the hospital cannot accept responsibility for the safety of your belongings.

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)** if applicable.

Consent – asking for your consent

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.

If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

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 there 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, 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 resolve. You can take over-the-counter painkillers as you usually would at home. You may experience some bleeding. If you do, 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 present. You will have stitches which are dissolvable. They will usually take approximately 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.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your Fenton's procedure, please contact the McNair Centre, **t:** 020 7188 7483, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

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

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

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

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

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

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, please get in touch.

t: 0800 731 0319 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

Leaflet number: 4005/VER2

Date published: February 2018

Review date: February 2021

© 2018 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

A list of sources is available on request