Recovering from Your Haemorrhoidectomy

Haemorrhoids, also known as piles, are veins in the anus and rectum that become swollen and inflamed. Large haemorrhoids can be painful and cause bleeding after opening bowels. Haemorrhoidectomy is necessary for large hemorrhoids that cannot be treated with banding alone. It involves surgically removing (making a cut) to remove the haemorrhoids, leaving an open wound to heal, with the intention of preserving function of the anal sphincter.

Restrictions

- Do not drink alcohol, use recreational drugs or make legal decisions for the first 48 hours.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking strong (opiate) analgesia.
- Do not fly for 3 weeks after surgery, unless cleared to do so.
- Do not lift more than 5kg or undertake strenuous exercise for 2-3 weeks after surgery.
- You can go for short walks and increase gradually.
- You may resume sexual activity after 1-2 weeks if you feel comfortable.
- Plan to return to work after 1-2 weeks. If your job involves heavy lifting, you may need longer.

Managing Pain

Pain varies for everyone and most pain will improve with pain-relief and rest. It is normal to have strong pain near the anus until your wounds are healed (2-6 weeks). We generally recommend the following pain management strategy; however, this will be individualised based on your medications and medical history. If you need additional pain relief, please contact our rooms to speak to the nurse.

Mild to Moderate Pain:

- Take regular paracetamol PLUS your prescribed anti-inflammatory according to the instructions on the box.

Severe Pain:

- Take paracetamol PLUS your prescribed anti-inflammatory PLUS Palexia (tapentadol) or Endone (oxycodone) according to the instructions on the box.
- **NOTE**: Palexia/Endone can cause sleepiness, dizziness, nausea/vomiting and constipation. Do not drive while taking these medications.

Preventing Complications

Avoid constipation: This is common after surgery. Be proactive! Take laxatives (Movicol, Coloxyl with Senna or Metamucil) if you have not opened your bowels in >24 hours. You should take laxatives to keep your bowels to a “toothpaste” like consistency for 2-3 weeks after surgery. You may wish to remain on a long-term fibre supplement such as Metamucil, Benefibre or psyllium husk to avoid getting haemorrhoids again.

Avoid blood clots: Some people are more at risk of developing blood clots after surgery. We suggest frequent walking and leg movements. If you usually take a blood thinning medication, you should resume this as instructed.

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Warning Signs: When to Call for Help

Call us or see your GP if you experience:

- Increased pain that is not relieved by medication.
- Thick or smelly discharge/pus from the anus.
- Prolonged heavy rectal bleeding
- Fevers, chills or generally feeling unwell with flu-like symptoms.
- Inability to pass urine, gas or stool.
- New pain or swelling in your calves, chest pain or shortness of breath.

If you are unable to reach us or it is after-hours. Please attend your local emergency department or dial 000 if it is an emergency.

Special Instructions for Haemorrrhoidectomy

Bleeding/discharge: It is normal to experience intermittent mild bleeding or discharge for a few weeks after surgery, particularly after a bowel movement. You may wish to wear a pad or liner to protect your underwear. We suggest cleaning the area with unscented anti-bacterial wipes after bowel movements. If you develop irritation (like a nappy rash), sudocrem can be used to protect the area.

Sitz baths: can help with managing pain and inflammation and reducing the risk of infection. Take a small receptacle that fits your bottom and add as hot as you can tolerate water (not boiling) and 1-2 teaspoons of cooking salt. Immerse your bottom in the water for 15-20 minutes, 3-4 times per day and after bowel movements. Pat dry or use a hairdryer.

Sensation of recurrent haemorrhoids: It is normal to feel swelling and inflammation around the wounds. There may be a sensation of a recurrent lump, prolapse or even haemorrhoid. This is usually due to swelling of the adjacent skin and will resolve in time.

Your Next Appointment

Our clinic nurse will see you about 4 weeks after your surgery. Please call 02 9997 7346 to book this follow up appointment if you do not already have one.

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