



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Advice following excision and closure of pilonidal sinus

Adult Day Surgery Unit

This leaflet gives advice to aid your recovery following your procedure on the Adult Day Surgery Unit.

What is pilonidal sinus?

- Pilonidal sinus is a long-term infection due to a reaction to ingrowing hairs in the skin in the buttock crease area.
- The sinus is a cavity below the skin that connects to the surface with one or more small openings. It is a common disorder that occurs most frequently between puberty and the age of 40.
- It is more common in overweight people and those with thick body hair.

After the operation

- Your pilonidal sinuses have been removed and the wound closed with stitches. Very occasionally, the wound will have been left open because of the degree of infection present but you will be told if this is the case.
- If you do have an open wound, it will have a dressing within the wound and this will need to be changed regularly by the practice nurse at your GP's surgery. Your practice nurse will advise you on who will change the dressing when the surgery is closed, e.g. weekends and bank holidays – if that is required. You will be given a discharge letter to take home and wound dressings to take with you for your dressing change. Soak in a bath before having the dressing changed.
- If your wound has been closed with sutures, you will have a dry dressing over the wound to absorb any discharge. Please take a daily bath/shower from 48 hours after surgery.

For the first two days, please change your dressing each time after your bath/shower, using the dressings provided. You may then leave the wound uncovered to help the healing process

- Clean your bottom with a damp cloth or kitchen paper towel after each bowel motion to prevent soiling the operation wound. Alternatively, sit in a bath after each bowel motion.
- It is normal to experience pain and discomfort after your operation and while the wound is healing. You should take regular painkillers (such as Paracetamol and Ibuprofen) to help relieve your pain.
- If there is any redness, swelling or excessive discharge from the wound, please contact your GP. You should expect some regular small volume bloody discharge for the first week.
- Do not drive until you can safely do an emergency stop. Check with your motor insurance company before resuming to drive.
- You should stay off work for _____
- You may need to refrain from work for longer than this, depending on the healing process. Please make an appointment with your GP if this needs to be reviewed.
- Avoid vigorous exercise/activity for four weeks.
- *Please make an appointment with the nurse at your GP's practice for removal of your stitches on _____
- *You have dissolvable stitches, so they do not need to be removed and may take four to six weeks to dissolve.

** Delete as appropriate*

Preventing further infections

- To help prevent your sinus from recurring, please keep the skin in the buttock crease clean and free of hair. This can be achieved by regular shaving of the area. Once the wound has healed, a hair removal product may be used.
- Maintain a healthy well-balanced diet and avoid excessive weight gain.
- If there is anything you do not understand or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with your nurse.

During the first 24 hours following your discharge

If you have any further concerns about your surgery, please telephone the ADSU: 0118 322 7622.

Opening hours are 7.30am to 10.00pm Monday-Friday. If you need help/advice outside these hours, please telephone the Royal Berkshire Hospital switchboard on 0118 322 5111 and ask for the on-call surgery doctor. Please note that this should be for emergencies only..

After 24 hours, please seek advice from your GP.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

ADSU, April 2025

Next review due: April 2027