



## Patient Information

# Bartholin's Abscess

### **What is Bartholin's Abscess?**

This gland is situated at the entrance to the vagina (front passage). Sometimes it can become blocked due to infection or injury, for instance following childbirth or intercourse. This can then form a cyst and when the fluid inside becomes infected, turning to pus, it is called an abscess.

### **How can the abscess be treated?**

Your own Doctor may have tried to treat the abscess with antibiotics. If it has not helped however, surgery may be needed. This may be done by incision (cut) and drainage of the pus. The abscess or cyst is opened, the contents are removed and the edges of the cut are stitched to the skin surface to help stop the abscess from reforming.

### **What will happen before my operation?**

Before going to theatre you will be seen by the anaesthetist who will go through what the anaesthetic involves with you.

If you are having a period this will not stop us from performing your operation. For a few hours before your operation it is important not to have anything to eat or drink. You should have been given advice about when to stop eating and drinking. Please have a bath or shower before coming to the hospital. Do not use talcum powder or body sprays. Remove all makeup, nail varnish and jewelry. Wedding rings can be worn; we can cover them with tape. Please do not have a shave at home as this is often not necessary.

Before leaving the ward you will be asked to put on the gown. When you go to theatre a ward nurse and porter will escort you.

### **What about the anaesthetic?**

A general anaesthetic begins in the anaesthetic room with an injection into a vein in the back of your hand. This produces sleep within a few seconds and by the time you wake up your operation will be over. Please be aware that within the anaesthetic room you may hear a series of checks being carried out. These are not to alarm you but are done to ensure your safety.

The anaesthetist will be happy to discuss any complications of the anaesthetic with you.



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## **Will I be sleepy before going to theatre?**

Often no pre-med is given, but if you feel particularly anxious the anaesthetist will be happy to prescribe a tablet to help relax you.

## **Are there any complications?**

As with all surgery there can be complications. These may include bleeding and infection. Bartholin's Abscess can re occur. Your doctor will be happy to discuss any of these with you.

## **When do I consent for the operation?**

Before we can do your operation, you need to sign a consent form. The surgeon will explain your operation and give you the opportunity to ask any further questions. This is normally done just before going to theatre and time may be limited. For this reason if you have any questions after reading this information leaflet then please do not hesitate to contact the ward before your admission.

## **What will happen after my operation?**

After your operation you will be taken to the recovery room until you are awake enough to come back to the ward. The nurses will be checking your blood pressure and pulse and look for any bleeding.

You might have a drip in your arm; this will give you all the fluid you need until you are drinking normally again. When you get back to the ward you will be allowed sips of water after some time you will be allowed something to eat.

When you first get up and walk around, take it slowly and let the nurses know if you have any bleeding.

Sometimes we will put a small dressing wick (small bandage) into the wound. This will help to drain any fluid / pus and keep the wound clean. This is usually left in for 24 hours. The nurse looking after you will let you know if you have a wick and when it can come out.

## **Will it be painful?**

You may experience some mild discomfort. We will prescribe painkillers for you to take during your stay with us, if you need any to take home as the nurse looking after you.

## **What happens when I get home?**

You will normally be allowed home the day after your operation. A friend or relative will need to collect you from the ward and stay with you over night.

It is advised that you rest for a couple of days and refrain from work or exercise for 1–2 weeks.



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You may experience some bleeding or discharge for up to a week. If you start to bleed heavily or find that the discharge is very smelly please contact your doctor. Changing your pads regularly will help to prevent infection. Bath or shower twice daily for 7-10 days will help to keep the wound clean. Avoid bath gels, powders etc. until the area is completely healed. Cleaning the area after using the toilet with a jug and warm water will also help.

You may have some small stitches but these will be dissolvable. So don't be alarmed if you notice a small piece of stitch on your pad.

Intercourse should be avoided until the area is completely healed.

### **When will I be seen again?**

We don't need to see you again at the hospital. Unless you have any worries or concerns there is no need to see your doctor before you go back to work. A sick certificate can be given to you by the hospital doctors before your go home. So please ask.

### **What if I have more questions?**

Friends and family, or even other patients may tell you things that can be alarming and often inaccurate. Try to get your advice from the doctors and nurses. It is important to remember that everyone recovers at a different pace. If you have any other questions please ask either a doctor or nurse. We hope your still with us will be comfortable. If there is anything that you are not happy with please approach the nurse looking after you who will try to remedy the situation.

If you have any concerns or worries within the first two weeks after discharge then please phone the ward for advice and ask to speak to the nurse in charge.

### **Tel:**

Early Pregnancy Unit/ Emergency Gynaecology Unit 01793 605257  
Beech Ward 01793 605254



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From 1st January 2019 smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

**This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email [gwh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.pals@nhs.net)**

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