

Day Case Unit, Horton General Hospital

# Fistula plug for anal fistula

Discharge information for patients



An anal fistula is an abnormal opening between the anal canal and the skin around the anus. It may cause symptoms such as pain or discomfort and leaking of blood or pus. In this procedure, a specially designed 'plug' is inserted into the fistula and stitched in place.

Today you have had your fistula 'plugged'.

## What to expect

The 'plugged' fistula may continue to drain as before – do not worry, this is a normal process. Drainage can occur for up to 12 weeks after the procedure as the plug is incorporated and the fistula tract is closed. If the fistula continues to leak it does not mean that the procedure has not worked.

Please follow these instructions:

- No strenuous activity for two weeks
- No lifting of items over 10lbs (5kg) for two weeks
- No exercise beyond a gentle walk for two weeks
- Shower standing up and bathe the area with water to soothe and keep it clean

## Sexual intercourse

You should abstain from sexual intercourse and not put anything into your vagina / rectum, e.g. tampons, for two weeks after the procedure.

## Risk of complications

All procedures carry some risks. For a fistula plug procedure the risks include:

- Inflammation of the surrounding tissue
- Hardening of the surrounding tissue
- The plug falls out
- The plug pokes out of the fistula tract
- Pocket of clear fluid forming around the fistula tract (seroma)

- Infection
- Abscess
- Reoccurrence of fistula
- Delayed or failed incorporation of fistula plug

If you are at all worried that any of these complications have occurred please contact your GP.

## Stitches

Dissolvable stitches (sutures) are used. There is no need to have these removed, your body will absorb the suture material over the following few weeks.

## Follow up

We usually like to see you in 8 weeks' time. Your nurse will advise you if this is any different. Your follow up appointment will be sent through the post.

## Antibiotics

You will be sent home with a course of antibiotics – please complete the course prescribed.

For specific instructions following a general anaesthetic, information about taking pain relief and emergency contact numbers, please see our separate leaflet – **Information and advice after a surgical procedure under general anaesthetic** – your nurse will give you a copy.

## Contact numbers

Horton Day Case Unit      Tel: 01295 229383

Horton E ward              Tel: 01295 229216

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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