

Day Case Unit

Advice after a HALO procedure for haemorrhoids

Information for patients



You have had a HALO procedure. HALO stands for Haemorrhoid Artery Ligation Operation. This is an operation to reduce the flow of blood to your haemorrhoids.

This type of procedure may also be referred to as a **HAL RAR** – Haemorrhoid Artery Ligation Recto Anal Repair.

What to expect after the operation

You are likely to experience some discomfort following this procedure. We may prescribe you medication to relieve the pain, but over the counter painkillers can also help, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen. Further advice on pain relief can be found in our leaflet '**Information and advice after surgery under a general anaesthetic**'. Please ask your nurse for a copy, if you haven't received one.

You may also experience some bleeding, which is normal, and you are likely to see blood in your first bowel movement (stool) following the surgery.

We recommend taking a warm water **sitz bath (shallow bath up to your hips)** several times a day, to reduce the discomfort in your anal area. Do not add bubble bath or soap to the water, as this may encourage an infection.

You may also find that you have the feeling that you need to pass a motion. This feeling may last for up to two weeks. It is important that you do not sit on the toilet trying to pass something that is not there, as this can lead to further complications.

For the next two weeks, to help with healing and to avoid putting pressure on your wound, please follow these instructions:

- No strenuous activity.
- No lifting of items over 10lbs (5kg), such as children or heavy bags of shopping.
- No exercise beyond a gentle walk.
- Bathe the area with warm water, to soothe and keep it clean. Do not apply any creams or ointments, unless they have been prescribed by your surgeon.

Sexual intercourse

You should not have sexual intercourse for two weeks after the procedure. This will disturb the operation site and delay healing, and may 'undo the operation'.

Do not insert anything in to your rectum during this time. If you are a woman, please do not insert anything into your vagina (such as tampons) for two weeks. Tampons increase the pressure on your rectal area, as the tampon will push against it.

Risk of complications

All procedures carry some risk; these will have been explained to you before the operation. For a HALO procedure the risks include:

- **Urinary retention** (difficulty emptying your bladder). This is a temporary complication which may occur, depending upon several factors. These include the amount of fluids you are given during and after the surgery; the degree of pain you may be experiencing; and whether you have a history of difficulty emptying your bladder.
- **Faecal impaction or constipation**, where a mass of hardened faeces (stool) becomes lodged in the rectum. This may be due to the discomfort following surgery, which can worsen after passing a stool. This may cause you to hold in your stool to lessen your pain.

Holding in stool is a common cause of constipation. Morphine based pain medicines may also cause constipation. Eating bulk fibre, such as bran, as well as taking laxative medicines (such as lactulose or Movicol), can help to prevent constipation.

- **Infection**

Signs of an infection include generally feeling unwell, with a high temperature or very smelly discharge from your rectum that is not faecal (it may be yellow in colour).

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

Stitches

Dissolvable stitches (sutures) will have been used to close any cuts. There is no need to have these removed, as your body will absorb them over the following weeks.

If you have any discomfort from your stitches, please see your GP or mention this when you come for your follow-up appointment (see next section).

Follow-up

We usually like to see you again in four to eight weeks' time. The nurse looking after you will tell you if this is any different. The appointment letter will be posted to you.

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 surgery under a general anaesthetic**'. Your nurse will give you a copy.

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALS@ouh.nhs.uk**

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