

Transanal haemorrhoidal de-arterialisation

Patient information leaflet

What are haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids are swollen blood vessels, which are found within the lining of the back passage (anal canal). They are often called piles. Some haemorrhoids can emerge from the anus during bowel movement. This is known as a prolapsed haemorrhoid. Some prolapsed haemorrhoids can be replaced by being pushed back, others remain permanently prolapsed.

What does the procedure involve?

The operation is performed under general anaesthetic as a day case procedure. The idea is for the surgeon to precisely locate all of the haemorrhoidal arteries and to tie them using a special device. This will lead to the shrinkage of the internal haemorrhoids.

If the piles are also protruding or prolapsing, then through the same device, the rectal mucosa (the lining of the rectum) can be shortened to pull the haemorrhoids up into their normal position into the anal canal.

The procedure involves no cutting of tissue, and does not cause any wounds. You should be able to leave a couple of hours after the operation.

Are there any alternatives?

The alternative is to surgically remove the haemorrhoids. Whilst this has the advantage of being a tried and tested procedure over many years, it also tends to be painful and usually requires a longer period of recovery. You should discuss which procedure is best for you with your surgeon.

What are the benefits?

- No open wound
- No need for any dressing
- Very little discomfort and no actual pain
- Very quick return to normal life and normal activities

Possible complications

- Some bleeding which will settle in most cases by itself.
- A small percentage of cases where the procedure cannot be repeated.

What would happen if my haemorrhoids were left untreated?

Untreated haemorrhoids can drop down outside the anal canal and strangulate (twist) causing pain.

Haemorrhoids can cause leakage of mucous, inflammation and irritation of the skin around the anus. Untreated haemorrhoids can also bleed, so you could become anaemic.

Will the haemorrhoids return after surgery?

Haemorrhoids can return after any form of treatment, if they do return other forms of treatment may be necessary.

How long will I be in hospital?

Due to advances in surgical techniques it is usually possible to have the procedure as a day case. If you do require an overnight stay you will normally be ready for discharge the next day.

What happens before the operation?

Prior to admission you will need to have a pre-operative assessment. This is an assessment of your health to make sure you are fully prepared for your admission, treatment and discharge. If you prefer we may be able to do this over the telephone, but you may need to come to the hospital if you need further tests.

The pre-operative assessment nurses will help you with any worries or concerns that you have and will give you advice on any preparation needed for your surgery. Please read the instructions given to you very carefully, before the date of your admission. If you are undergoing a general anaesthetic you will be given specific instructions about when to stop eating and drinking, please follow these carefully as otherwise this may pose an anaesthetic risk and we may have to cancel your surgery.

You should bath or shower before coming to hospital. You will be asked to change into a theatre gown when you arrive.

On admission a member of the nursing staff will welcome you. The nurses will look after you and answer any questions you may have. Prior to surgery you may be given an enema (a liquid medication given into the 'back passage' to empty the bowel).

The surgeon and anaesthetist will visit you and answer any questions that you have. You will be asked to sign a consent form. A nurse will go with you to the anaesthetic room and stay with you until you are asleep. A cuff will be put on your arm, some leads placed on your chest, and a clip attached to your finger. This will allow the anaesthetist to check your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen levels during the operation. A needle will be put into the back of your hand to give you the drugs to send you to sleep.

What happens after the operation?

The nurses will be monitoring your recovery, checking your blood pressure and pulse. If you have any discomfort they will give you appropriate pain killers.

You will normally be able to start drinking shortly after the procedure, and can start eating as soon as you are hungry. You will normally be able to get out of bed a few hours after surgery, although the nurses will assist you the first time.

If an anal plug has been inserted this will usually be removed a few hours after surgery.

If a dissolvable anal plug has been used this will be passed on your first bowel movement. A small amount of bleeding is also to be expected. If your operation is planned as a day case you can go home as soon as the effect of the anaesthetic has worn off.

A general anaesthetic can temporarily affect your coordination and reasoning skills so you will need a responsible adult to take you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours. During this time it is also important that you do not operate machinery, drive or make important decisions. Your GP will be notified of your treatment. If a hospital follow-up appointment is required you will be notified of this prior to discharge and the appointment card will be posted to you.

After care

- You can be discharged a couple of hours after the operation.
- Maintain a normal diet with a high fruit and vegetable content.
- Sit daily for a couple of weeks in warmish salty water to reduce congestion in the area.
- A small amount of post-operative bleeding is quite normal however if you experience excessive bleeding please contact your surgeon or nearest accident and emergency department.

Bowel action and personal hygiene

It is important to maintain a regular bowel movement that should be well formed but soft. Eating a high fibre diet and increasing your fluid intake will also help. You will normally open your bowels within two to three days of your operation although this may be uncomfortable at first. You may notice blood loss after each bowel movement but this will gradually reduce over the next few weeks.

If possible, wash after each bowel action for three to four weeks after the operation. Bathing once or twice a day is also soothing and may reduce discomfort.

Contact details

Contact Level 2 in the North East Surgery Centre
Telephone number: 0191 445 3044/3005

Data Protection

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible.

In order to assist us improve the services available your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews. Further information is available in the leaflet Disclosure of Confidential Information IL137, via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website or the PALS Service.

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Author:	Mr Mark Katory

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