

## Information for Patients

# Care of your vulva following laser treatment

The vulva is the term used to describe the visible part of the female genitalia.

The laser is a powerful light that burns the skin and helps remove the abnormal area. This light leaves an area on your vulva that is like a burn and needs to heal.

Laser surgery aims to remove the abnormal cells on the vulva. It is important that you come back for all your appointments to monitor the health of your vulva and to ensure that the abnormality has not recurred.

### What to expect on the day of treatment

The treatment takes between 10 and 20 minutes but you should allow approximately half an hour for the whole visit. You are welcome to bring a friend, partner or relative with you and they can stay with you throughout the procedure if you wish.

You will be asked to undress from the waist down in a private cubicle. You will be given special protective glasses to wear to protect your eyes from the laser beam. The treatment is performed under local anaesthetic, which can be uncomfortable, but will numb the area quickly for the treatment.

### What to expect after your treatment

Whilst you are healing, it is common to have some pain and swelling at the place where the treatment was performed. The pain usually does not last longer than 2 weeks. Cool packs covered and applied gently may give some relief from these symptoms. You may find it useful to take pain relief and anti-inflammatory tablets during this time, such as Ibuprofen or Paracetamol. You do not need a prescription to buy these medicines. It is important to take them as directed by your pharmacist.

You can experience some bloodstained watery discharge following your treatment and you should wear a sanitary pad during this time.

## How should I take care of myself after the laser surgery?

To avoid infection whilst you are healing, wash your hands with soap and water before and after you touch your vulva.

Wash your vulva gently each day during your bath or shower, but do not use any perfumed products which may irritate the skin. Gently pat the area dry with a clean towel. Do not have sex until the area heals. This could take a few weeks.

You will be most comfortable in cotton underpants and loose fitting clothes after this kind of surgery.

## When to seek advice

If you experience any of the following:

- Offensive smelling discharge or heavy bleeding.
- If you feel unwell with a fever.
- If your pain is not controlled with over the counter pain relief.
- If your vulva is not healing after 4 weeks.

## Saint Mary's Hospital contact numbers:

Should you require any additional information or help please contact:

### Saint Mary's Hospital patients:

**Secretaries:** (0161) 701 6922/276 6387 (8.30 am – 5.00 pm)

**Nurse Colposcopists:** (0161) 276 5485 (8.30 am - 5.00 pm)

**Gynaecology Nurse advice line:** (0161) 276 6104. This is an answerphone - we will get back to you within 1 working day.

**Emergency Gynaecology Unit contact number: (0161) 276 6204**

### For Trafford General Hospital patients:

(0161) 746 2260