



Saint Mary's Hospital

Gynaecology Service - Whitworth Clinic

Surgical Abortion

Information for patients



Welcome to the Whitworth Clinic at Saint Mary's Hospital

This leaflet aims to give you some information about Surgical Abortion and help to answer any questions you may have.

It is intended only as a guide and there will be an opportunity for you to talk to your nurse and doctor about your care and treatment to help you through this time.

If you feel the need to discuss your decision or explore your thoughts and feelings before or after the abortion, please access our counselling service. You can make an appointment on **(0161) 276 6283** (8.30 am - 4.30 pm; answerphone available out of hours) or ask a member of staff.

Our service is confidential; however, if we feel that you or another person may be at risk of harm, we may need to share information with other professionals. We would always discuss this with you.

Please let your nurse know if you do not want your GP to be contacted.

About Surgical Abortion

Surgical Abortion is a simple procedure where gentle suction is used to empty the uterus (womb). The operation is safe and suitable for most women, and is performed under a general anaesthetic (you will be put to sleep). It usually only requires you to be admitted to the ward for one day and is performed between 8 – 12 weeks of pregnancy. It is important that you tell the nurse or doctor if you have any medical conditions.

What are the risks of surgery?

Minor complications occur in 1 to 2 cases in every 100. These include:

- Incomplete treatment.
- Post-operative infection.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Excessive bleeding.

Major complications are rare. They occur in an estimated 1 to 2 cases in every 1,000. They include:

- Damage to your cervix.
- Perforation of the womb.
- Blood transfusion.
- A serious allergic reaction to the anaesthetic.

Further surgery is usually required to treat any major complications.

Consent

We must by law obtain your consent to any operation. Staff will explain the risks and benefits of the surgery. You will then be asked to sign a consent form. If you are unsure about any aspect of the treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

What preparation will I need?

It is very important that you do not have anything to eat or drink for at least 6 hours before your operation. This includes sweets and chewing gum. You may be allowed water up to two hours before surgery - your nurse or doctor will confirm this with you.

You should have a bath or shower prior to the operation and please remove any body piercings and nail varnish from fingers and toes. Valuables and jewellery should be left at home.

You will be asked to attend the Admissions Lounge or Gynaecology ward on the day of your surgery, where you will be prepared for your surgery. You will be given a specific time to arrive and it is important that you arrive on time so that your operation is not delayed.

You will be seen by a nurse, the doctor performing the operation and the anaesthetist (doctor who will administer the general anaesthetic).

Depending on your circumstances (for example, if you have not had a vaginal delivery before or your pregnancy is over 10 weeks) it may be necessary for you to have some tablets by mouth 2-3 hours before the operation. This is to prepare your cervix for the operation. In some women this may cause period type pain, bleeding, headaches, dizziness, diarrhoea or a skin rash. Please inform your nurse if any of these occur.

You will be required to wear a theatre gown, some anti-embolus socks ('flight socks' - to prevent blood clots in your legs), and disposable underwear.

When it is time, you will be escorted to theatre and put to sleep with a general anaesthetic. A member of the theatre team will be with you at all times. A friend or relative may be able to sit with you in the theatre waiting area until you go into the main theatre. Please note this may not always be possible and you would need to speak to your nurse beforehand regarding this.

Following your surgery, you will wake up in the theatre recovery area. You will stay here for a short period of time before returning to the ward. On return to the ward we will ask you to rest, and you will be monitored over the next couple of hours. You may have some period type pain which your nurse can give

you simple pain relief for, and you may have a heavy period-type blood loss, sometimes with clots. Some women feel nauseous or vomit following a general anaesthetic. Your nurse can give you medication to help with this.

What arrangements should I make for going home?

The operation is usually performed as a day case, so you should make arrangements for someone to pick you up from hospital and stay with you overnight.

You will be discharged home, once you have had something to eat and drink, passed urine and are able to walk around the ward area without feeling sick or dizzy. Your nurse will check that your bleeding is not too heavy and any pain is well controlled.

For 24 hours after the anaesthetic you must not:

- Drive a vehicle.
- Drink alcohol.
- Make important decisions (such as signing any legal documents).
- Use hazardous machinery.
- Engage in sport, strenuous exercise, heavy work or lifting.

Contraception

You can get pregnant straight away! You must use a reliable method of contraception before you have sex again. If you haven't already decided, we can help you choose the method that is best for you.

What can I expect at home following treatment?

Bleeding

You may experience vaginal bleeding similar to a period for up to 10 days after surgery.

Whilst you are bleeding the cervix may be open, and there is a risk of infection. To reduce this risk, we advise that until the bleeding has stopped you **AVOID** having sex, **DO NOT** use tampons and **DO NOT** undertake water sports. During this time you are however, advised to shower or bath daily.

Pain

Some abdominal pain or tenderness may be experienced for up to 48 hours after surgery. You may take simple pain relieving drugs such as paracetamol or ibuprofen based products, but always read the label/instructions before taking them.

A hot water bottle may be helpful to ease any period type cramps.

It is important to contact the Clinic, Ward or your GP if you have continuous bleeding, heavy bleeding, are passing clots, have pain or a smelly discharge.

Rest

You may feel tired for 1–2 days after surgery. Rest as necessary and resume normal activities as you feel able. We advise you to take 1–2 days off work. You should not drive or operate machinery for at least 24 hours.

Sex

You may resume sex when the bleeding has stopped (to help prevent infection); you feel ready in yourself and have adequate reliable contraception.

When can I expect a period?

Every woman is different regarding how soon after the operation to expect a period, however sometime in the next 3-8 weeks is considered usual.

Often this first period may be heavier or lighter than normal, but should return to normal within 2-3 months.

This may be dependant on your chosen method of contraception.

Will I need a follow-up appointment?

We do not routinely offer a follow up appointment, however if you are experiencing any problems, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Emotions

It is normal to feel a range of emotions after an abortion. We are all different and we all react and recover in different ways - there is no right or wrong way.

You may feel, for example: relieved, sad, numb, confused or angry. It is common to feel 'up and down' for a while.

If you need to talk to someone, would like to speak to the counsellor, or if you have any questions or worries, then please call us on **(0161) 276 6283**.

If you have any other questions not covered in this leaflet, please do not hesitate to ask your nurse or doctor.

Helpful contact numbers:

The Whitworth Clinic

(Monday-Friday, 8.00 am-4.00 pm)

(0161) 276 6283

Outside of these hours call Ward 62

Ward 62 (24 hours)

(0161) 701 4112

(0161) 276 6105

Manchester Contraception and Sexual Health Service

(0161) 701 1555

FPA (Family Planning Association) www.fpa.org.uk

0845 310 1334

Sexual Health Line www.condomessentialwear.co.uk

0800 567 123

NHS direct (24 hours)

0845 4647

NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

Violence, Aggression and Harassment Control Policy

We are committed to the well-being and safety of our patients and of our staff. Please treat other patients and staff with the courtesy and respect that you expect to receive. Verbal abuse, harassment and physical violence are unacceptable and will lead to prosecutions.

Suggestions, Concerns and Complaints

If you would like to provide feedback you can:

- Ask to speak to the ward or department manager.
- Write to us: Patient Advice and Liaison Services, 1st Floor, Cobbett House, Manchester Royal Infirmary, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9WL
- Log onto the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk - click on 'Comments'.

If you would like to discuss a concern or make a complaint:

- Ask to speak to the ward or department manager - they may be able to help straight away.
- Contact our **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** -
Tel: 0161 276 8686 Email: pals@cmft.nhs.uk.
Ask for our information leaflet.

We welcome your feedback so we can continue to improve our services.

Please use this space to write down any questions or concerns you may have.

No Smoking Policy

The NHS has a responsibility for the nation's health.

Protect yourself, patients, visitors and staff by adhering to our no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted within any of our hospital buildings or grounds.

The Manchester Stop Smoking Service can be contacted on Tel: (0161) 205 5998 (www.stopsmokingmanchester.co.uk).

Translation and Interpretation Service

It is our policy that family, relatives or friends cannot interpret for patients. Should you require an interpreter ask a member of staff to arrange it for you.

تتص سياستنا على عدم السماح لافراد عائلة المرضى او اقاربهم او اصدقائهم بالترجمة لهم. اذا احتجت الى مترجم فيرجى ان تطلب ذلك من احد العاملين ليترتب لك ذلك.

بماری یہ پالیسی ہے کہ خاندان ، رشتہ دار اور دوست مریضوں کے لئے ترجمہ نہیں کر سکتے۔ اگر آپ کو مترجم کی ضرورت ہے تو عملے کے کسی رکن سے کہیں کہ وہ آپ کے لئے اس کا بندوبست کر دے۔

ইহা আমাদের নীতি যে, একজন রোগীর জন্য তার পরিবারের সদস্য, আত্মীয় বা কোন বন্ধু অনুবাদক হতে পারবেন না। আপনার একজন অনুবাদকের প্রয়োজন হলে তা একজন কর্মচারীকে জানান অনুবাদকের ব্যবস্থা করার জন্য।

Nasze zasady nie pozwalają na korzystanie z pomocy członków rodzin pacjentów, ich przyjaciół lub ich krewnych jako tłumaczy. Jeśli potrzebują Państwo tłumacza, prosimy o kontakt z członkiem personelu, który zorganizuje go dla Państwa.

Waa nidaamkeena in qoys, qaraaboamasaaxiiboaysanu tarjumikarinbukaanka. Haddiiaad u baahatotarjumaankacodsoxubinka mid ah shaqaalahainaykuusameeyaan.

我们的方针是，家属，亲戚和朋友不能为病人做口译。如果您需要口译员，请叫员工给您安排。



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