



# Pilonidal sinus or abscess operation: aftercare advice

## Information for patients from Day Surgery

You have had surgery to remove a pilonidal sinus or abscess. This information leaflet explains how you should care for your wound when you return home.

### When you get home and for the first few days after your surgery

- Arrange for someone to collect you from hospital and look after you for the first 24 hours.
- You must rest for 24 to 48 hours after your operation.
- If you have had a general anaesthetic, avoid drinking alcohol, smoking, or taking sleeping tablets for 24 hours after your operation.
- If you have had a general anaesthetic, do not drive, cook, or operate any machinery for 24 to 48 hours after your operation.

### How do I care for my wound?

- You will be told before you leave hospital whether you have had dissolvable stitches (they will dissolve on their own over time) or whether you need to make an appointment to have your stitches removed by your district or GP practice nurse.
- If your wound has been left open (you have had no stitches), the dressing will need to be changed daily after 48 hours by the district nurse or at your GP surgery.
- If your wound is closed (you have had stitches), the dressing should be kept dry and left in place for a full week, if possible. You can remove the dressing yourself, unless you have a district nurse or GP practice nurse doing your dressing changes.
- You can shower or bath again one week after your surgery.
- At least three times a day take a short walk to avoid stiffness of your muscles and joints.

### When can I start driving again?

You should avoid driving for at least one week following your surgery. You must be able to perform an emergency stop without pain before you can start driving again. If in doubt, please speak to your GP.

### When can I resume my normal activities?

Do not start your normal activities again (such as exercise/sport, housework, or gardening) until your wound has healed; which can take up to one month.



### When can I return to work?

You can return to work when you feel well enough, usually a week after your surgery. Please speak to your GP about this.

### How can I avoid this happening again?

To avoid further problems with this condition, you should make sure that all the hair is removed from your back and buttocks, by regular shaving, using depilatory cream, or waxing the area.

### What complications should I look out for?

- Your wound may bleed, this can be stopped by applying pressure to your wound for 10 minutes. If the bleeding continues, please contact one of the helplines listed below.
- If you have excessive redness, pain, or swelling around your wound, please contact your GP as you may have developed an infection and need antibiotics.
- The pilonidal sinus or abscess may reappear, particularly if you do not continue to remove the hair from your back or buttocks. If this happens you may need further treatment.

### What if I have any questions or concerns?

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Day Surgery on the numbers below or your GP.

- Channel Day Surgery, **William Harvey Hospital**, Ashford  
Telephone: 01233 61 62 63 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- Canterbury Day Surgery Centre, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**  
Telephone: 01227 78 31 14 (7.30am to 8pm)  
Telephone: 07887 68 76 45 (8pm to 7.30am)
- Day Surgery Unit, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital**, Margate  
Telephone: 01843 23 44 99 (7.30am to 8pm)  
Telephone: 07887 65 11 62 (8pm to 7.30am)

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments** please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email [ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site [www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation](http://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation)