

Surgery for pilonidal sinus

What is a pilonidal sinus?

A pilonidal sinus is a problem in your natal cleft (the area between your buttocks) that can cause infection.

Hairs can grow in your natal cleft, or loose hairs can fall and collect in your natal cleft.

Hairs carry bacteria, which can cause inflammation and infection.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Washing your natal cleft every day to prevent hairs building up and removing hair from the area by waxing or using a hair removal cream may help to prevent an infection.

An occasional discharge can be treated with antibiotics.

It is sometimes possible to have a procedure under a local anaesthetic to drain an abscess.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under general anaesthetic and usually takes about 30 minutes.

Your surgeon will remove the sinus and infected tissue, sometimes over a large area.

How can I prepare myself for the operation?

If you smoke, stopping smoking now may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

What complications can happen?

General complications of any operation

- bleeding
- allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- blood clot in your leg
- blood clot in your lung
- chest infection

Specific complications of this operation

- partial breakdown of your wound
- slow healing
- numbness around your wound
- recurrence

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day.

You should be able to return to work after 2 to 3 weeks.

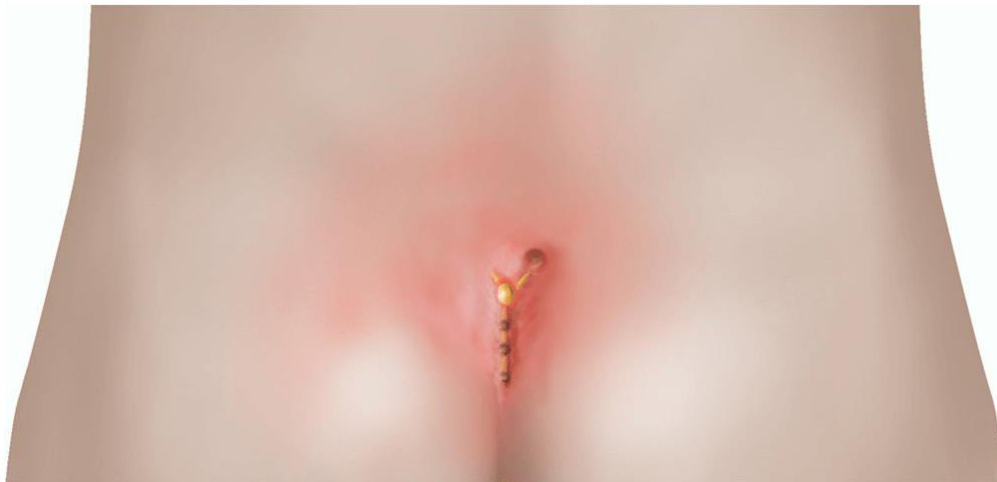
Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

The pilonidal sinus can come back.

It is important to keep the area free from hairs and as clean as possible to reduce this risk.

Summary

Pilonidal sinus is a common problem in young adults and is best treated by surgery. It can cause an abscess or continued discharge.



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