

Preventing and detecting infection: We recommend you

- Complete taking any antibiotics that have been prescribed for you.
- Use sanitary pads rather than tampons until the bleeding stops.
- Avoid sources of possible infection such as spa pools and swimming pools until at least one week after your surgery, or until the bleeding has stopped.
- Contact your GP straight away if you develop flu like symptoms; get a temperature over 38°C; have pain or difficulty passing urine; bleeding becomes heavy and you pass clots or have a smelly vaginal discharge.

Sexual Activity:

We advise you not to have sexual intercourse for 2 weeks or until bleeding has stopped.

Driving and returning to work:

We advise you not to drive for 24 hours after your surgery.

We recommend you don't return to work for a day, for two to three days or until you feel comfortable

Please let us know if you need a medical certificate for time off work.

Any questions?

Ask the nurse caring for you if you have any questions or concerns about the treatment proposed or about information in this leaflet.

Bartholins Abscess

Information for women

Bartholins Abscess

You have been admitted to National Women's with a condition called a **Bartholins abscess**. This leaflet is to provide you with some information about the condition and to outline the usual treatment.

A **Bartholins abscess** can develop when a small, mucus secreting gland, just near the entrance to your vagina, gets blocked and becomes infected. Some women have 'cysts' of the Bartholins gland but they usually only cause a problem if the gland becomes infected. This is generally an acute condition that is extremely painful and needs treatment; surgery, or antibiotics or both.

On admission to hospital a doctor will examine you. This may be uncomfortable, but most doctors can diagnose a Bartholins abscess without having to touch the painful area. The doctor will take a medical history and check whether you are allergic to any antibiotics. The doctor will usually advise that you go to the operating theatre to have the abscess drained or have the gland removed.

The Operation

Surgery for treating a Bartholins abscess is usually carried out under general anaesthetic because the area is so sensitive. Therefore it is very important that you do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours prior to going to theatre. Pain relief is available when needed.

The doctor carrying out the operation will make a small incision over the abscess so it can be drained. The edges are stitched to the base (marsupialisation) to allow drainage of the mucus later and to avoid a recurrence of the abscess. The small cavity left is usually dressed with a small gauze pack, which is removed after 12 –24 hours. This can be done while in the shower. Most women require some form of pain relief, as this can be very uncomfortable.

The complete removal of the Bartholins gland is not done very often and is carried out usually when the problem is a recurring one. This surgery is more extensive than draining the abscess. The gland will not be removed during an acute infection or when an abscess is present.

After the operation

You will be able to leave hospital after the surgery once the dressing pack has been removed. As this is a day surgery procedure, overnight stay in hospital is not usually required.

Discharge Advice

Pain Relief:

You may get some discomfort for the next day.

You should find Panadol helpful as pain relief. If this does not control the pain contact your GP who will check your condition.