

# Excision of vulval lesion

**i** Information for patients  
Gynaecology



**PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

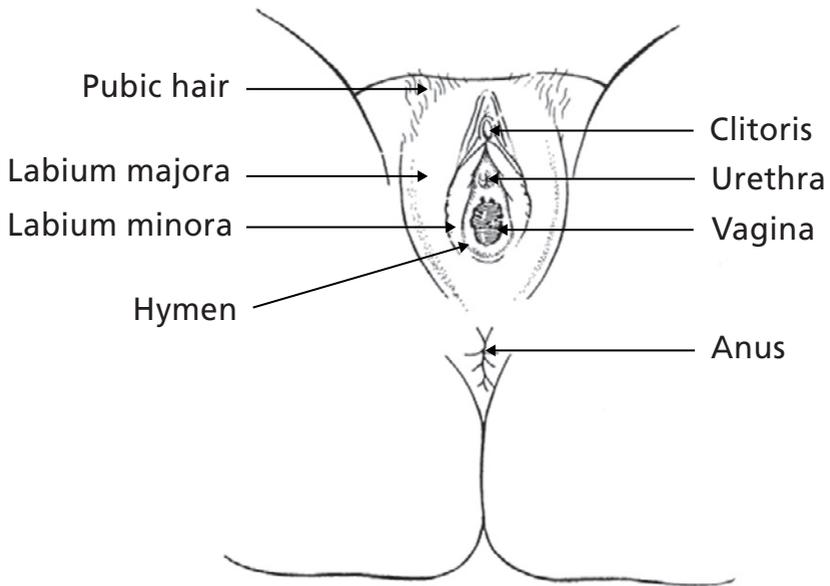
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## What is a vulval lesion?

A vulval lesion is an area of abnormal or sore skin in your vulval area (outer folds of skin around the vagina).



## What is an excision of a vulval lesion?

This is a small operation to remove an area of abnormal skin or a sore area from your vulva. Stitches are used to close the edges of the healthy skin together. The abnormal skin will be sent to the laboratory and examined under a microscope. The results will tell us if all the abnormal cells have been removed and if any further treatment is required.

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic (you will be asleep), spinal anaesthetic (you will be awake but numb from the waist down) or local anaesthetic.

If the skin removed is close to your urethra (the entrance leading to your bladder through which you pass urine) you may need to have a urinary catheter inserted for a short time. This will drain urine from your bladder until your wound is healed enough so that you can pass urine comfortably.

## **What are the risks of having this operation?**

This is usually a safe procedure but as with any operation there are risks and these include:

- Wound infection; the wound can sometimes open slightly. If this happens the wound is allowed to heal by itself.
- Bleeding; usually there is very little bleeding after this operation but you may get a light blood-stained discharge during this time.
- Blood clots in the veins in your legs or lungs. Please also read the leaflet 'Preventing blood clots while you are in hospital and after you leave'.

As with any procedure, we must seek your consent beforehand. Staff will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives where relevant before they ask for your consent. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to ask for more information

## **How can I prepare for my operation?**

Please read the information leaflets provided at your outpatient and pre-operative assessment appointments. They will provide you with useful information so that you know what to expect during your admission to hospital. It is important that you tell us of any health problems you have and any medication you take. Please continue with any medication unless otherwise advised.

To make sure that you are in the best possible health before you have your operation, you should:

- If you are a smoker, try to give up or cut down
- Lose weight if advised
- Eat a well-balanced diet
- Try to stop or cut down on drinking alcohol
- It is very important that you do not have sexual intercourse in the month that your surgery is planned unless you use barrier methods of contraception

## **What will happen before my operation?**

You may be asked to attend the pre-operative assessment clinic on the day of your gynaecology clinic appointment or an appointment will be arranged approximately 5-10 days before your operation. At this clinic you will see a nurse practitioner and possibly an anaesthetic doctor. A physical examination and blood tests will be carried out and any other investigations that are necessary for your operation to go ahead.

## **What will happen on the day of my operation?**

You will be admitted to either Theatre Admissions Unit (TAU) or Surgical Day Unit (SDU). This will be confirmed in your admission letter along with the time you need to arrive.

## **What will happen after my operation?**

You will be taken to the recovery room and monitored until you are ready to go back to the day case ward.

## **Will I have any pain?**

You may have some soreness following the operation. The pain should be relieved by taking simple pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. The pain should settle within 5 days.

## **Will I feel sick?**

You may feel sick after your operation, which is probably as a side effect of the anaesthetic or pain relief you may have been given. Medication is available to help with this.

## **When will I be able to go home?**

You should be able to go home on the same day or you may need to stay in hospital for a few days. This will depend on the area of skin removed. Please be prepared for this and make any necessary arrangements before your admission.

You will be able to go home when:

- You have eaten and are able to drink normally
- Your vaginal bleeding has settled
- You can pass urine normally

## **Will I see my doctor before I go home?**

No, not always. Your doctor may come and discuss your operation with you. Sometimes your doctor will write to you instead. you will be informed of this before you go home.

## **How do I look after my wound(s)?**

Your wound(s) should remain uncovered and it is important to keep them clean. Daily showers are a good idea. You must make sure you dry your wound(s) well afterwards.

Your stitches should dissolve or fall out within a couple of weeks of the operation. If you have stitches that need removing this will be explained to you by the nurse before you go home.

## **How long will I bleed for after my operation?**

You may experience some light blood-stained discharge for about 2 weeks after the operation.

## **When can I go back to work?**

It is usual to have at least 2-3 days off work after your operation.

## **Do I need to avoid anything following my operation?**

Avoid using scented soaps, bubble bath, bath oils etc. until your wound has healed. You may also find that wearing a skirt or loose trousers is more comfortable than tight clothing.

You should avoid sexual intercourse until your wound is fully healed. This may increase the risk of infection and the wound may open up.

## **When do I get the results and how long will this take?**

Your doctor will either write to you with the results or see you in the Gynaecology Clinic to discuss them approximately 4 to 6 weeks after your operation.

## Is there anything I should look out for?

You should contact your GP or the Gynaecology Clinic if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Vaginal bleeding that is heavy or smelly
- You begin to feel feverish or unwell
- Pain that is not controlled with paracetamol or ibuprofen (simple pain relief)

## Who can I contact if I have any questions?

If you need any further information then please do not hesitate to contact:

- Gynaecology Outpatient Department: **0114 226 8441**
- Gynaecology Ward G1: **0114 226 8225 (outside office hours)**



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