

Patient Information

Urology

Patient information for transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP)

Your consultant has explained to you that you are to have an operation called a transurethral resection of the prostate, or TURP. This procedure aims to solve the problems you have when passing urine. An operation is the standard surgical treatment for a benign prostatic obstruction (BPO).

Prostate gland enlargement is very common as men get older and can often cause problems with passing urine. This is because the gland sits under the bladder and around the urethra (water pipe). As the prostate gets bigger it presses on the urethra and obstructs the passage of urine from the bladder.

What does the operation involve?

The operation can take place under a spinal anaesthetic or epidural, where you will be awake throughout the surgery, or a general anaesthetic. The procedure involves removing some of the prostate tissue by cutting it away with heat from an electrical current. This is done by passing a telescope into the urethra through the penis.

Because the operation is performed through the penis, you will not have any scars or wounds. To enable the area to heal, a small thin tube (catheter) will be inserted into your bladder at the end of the procedure. This will also allow you to pass urine. The operation takes approximately 45 minutes.



Are there any side effects?

As with any type of surgery, there are some side effects from the TURP operation. The most common is a mild burning sensation, increased frequency, and occasional bleeding when passing urine.

If the bleeding becomes heavy and is associated with clots and is causing you to have problems passing urine, another catheter may need to be inserted and the bladder flushed out. In that event, you will have to report back to the hospital via the Emergency Department, as only a Urology Registrar should insert a catheter after your operation.

The removal of prostate tissue does not usually affect your ability to have sex. However, you will experience a dry orgasm called a retrograde ejaculation. Retrograde ejaculation happens because the cored-out prostate is less resistant and allows the semen to travel back into the bladder. This is not harmful to you, and you will pass the semen the next time you urinate.

As a result of the retrograde ejaculation, it is unlikely that you will be able to father children. However, it is important not to rely on this as a reliable form of contraception.

After the operation

When you return to the ward following the operation, you may experience some pain or discomfort which could last up to 48 hours. Simple pain killing medication can be taken which should control the pain adequately. You may have fluid going into your bladder. This is to flush the bladder and make sure you have a good urine output. You may also notice some blood in your urine. However, this is nothing to worry about, and will usually settle quite quickly. The urinary catheter is usually removed approximately 24 hours after the operation at midnight, or 6am in the morning.

Passing urine

Most patients usually pass urine after a few hours of the catheter being removed. However, a few patients do have temporary difficulties and may need to have a catheter re-inserted to help drain the urine. Occasionally, the catheter will be removed again whilst you are in hospital. Alternatively, your consultant may decide to let you go home with the catheter in place for **at least 2 weeks**.

At home

The average stay in hospital for this operation is 48 hours, but this can vary, depending on individual circumstances.

When you return home from hospital it is important to take things easy. You may notice that you pass urine more frequently than before, but this will subside as your operation site begins to heal. It is advised that you do no heavy lifting or strenuous exercise for approximately 6-8 weeks after the procedure to allow your wound to heal.

You should be able to drive after 2 weeks following surgery, and can resume sexual intercourse after 6 weeks, as long as you feel comfortable. Unless you have a manual job, you can usually return to work after 3 to 4 weeks.

Potential problems

If you experience any problems or you develop any of the following symptoms, please contact your GP as soon as possible:

- Strong smelling cloudy looking urine
- Fever/high temperature
- Blood and clots in your urine which last for 24-48 hours, making it difficult to urinate.
- No urine drainage
- Severe abdominal pain

Further information

For further information or advice please contact **Ward 33 (Urology) 024 7696 5380**.

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