

AFTER TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

-DON'T FORGET YOU'VE HAD AN ANAESTHETIC

After the operation it is best to be driven directly home, have a light meal then put yourself to bed for two hours. You might feel slightly drowsy for the rest of the day and we recommend staying at home with someone to supervise you. From the time of your surgery DO NOT drive a motor vehicle for 24 hours, operate machinery, sign any important documents and make any big decisions. The anaesthetic will not entirely wear off until the next day. Avoid alcohol.

-EXERCISE

It is wise to avoid any strenuous exercise for one week, especially contact sports, horse riding and swimming.

-HOW CAN I REDUCE THE RISK OF INFECTION?

Take the antibiotics prescribed for you by the doctor. Report to us any side effects. Please avoid having sex for 2 weeks after the surgery. Once the bleeding slows down to light then tampons are ok if changed regularly (2 hourly) Always insert with **cleanly washed hands. Only use pads overnight.**

If you feel unwell or suspect symptoms of infection please contact us. We recommend checking your temperature every 4 hours if feeling unwell and reporting to us if you have 2 or more temperatures above 37.5 degrees. Other symptoms of infection include: increased vaginal discharge with an offensive odour, increasing lower abdominal pain especially if tender when pressed, headaches, loss of appetite, and increased vaginal bleeding. Infections often present with one or more of these symptoms so if you are concerned please contact us immediately.

-WHAT WILL THE BLEEDING BE LIKE?

It is normal to bleed for up to 2 weeks after the operation. The bleeding may come and go, often becoming heaviest after 4 – 5 days. This is when the uterus sheds its lining, causing increased bleeding often with a few **dark** coloured clots and mildly increased abdominal cramping. This stage usually lasts only for 24 hours and settles with “ period pain” tablets. Please contact us if: this doesn't settle, if you have a fever, if you have **bright bleeding for more than 2 weeks** and if you experience **heavy bright bleeding** i.e. need to change your pad **more than every 2 hours**. It is ok to have only light bleeding for a few days after the surgery.

-WHAT ABOUT THE PAIN?

Mild period pain or cramping may occur for a few days after the operation. The pain should be relieved by simple analgesics e.g. “ period pain” medications. Sometimes when the loss suddenly becomes heavier with the dark clots at about day five, the cramps may return as the uterus expels the small dark clots. Again the use of analgesic medication may be necessary. Note; some people are unable to take anti-inflammatory medications so first check with your pharmacist. If your pain is not relieved by these simple measures and is **worsening** contact us.

-PREGNANCY SYMPTOMS

The nausea should subside over the next few days and breast tenderness within 2 weeks. **IF YOUR PREGNANCY SYMPTOMS DO NOT SETTLE WITHIN 2 WEEKS FROM THE OPERATION PLEASE CONTACT US.** Your urine pregnancy test will take 2 -3 weeks to become negative so we often recommend blood tests to ensure that your pregnancy hormone levels are dropping. If you are not on the contraceptive pill your next period should come in 4 – 6 weeks. If it takes longer we suggest review for a pregnancy test and ultrasound.

-CONTRACEPTION

You can fall pregnant again even before your next period, so start contraception immediately. If you decide to take the pill then start the day after the operation and don't wait until your next period. If you are going to have an injection for contraception, then wait for 10 days before seeing your doctor. If you have chosen an IUD then you will need to wait until your first period but use some form of contraception in the meantime. And most importantly don't forget that condoms used as well, will protect you from sexually transmitted diseases, so always practice safe sex!

-IF I FEEL A BIT DOWN

It is not unusual to experience some grief after a stressful decision. This shouldn't last for long. If it persists then you should contact your local doctor. Don't forget that we can put you in contact with a professional counsellor if your local doctor is not available. If you need assistance with professional counselling contact us or visit our website for a list of counselling services.

-DO I NEED A POST OPERATIVE CHECK UP?

It is recommended that you see your GP in 10 days time to make sure that there are no problems. Of course, if you are worried about anything or things aren't going as you expected then contact us at The Hampton Park Women's Health Care Centre on 03 97992817.

In emergencies call Dr _____ Mobile _____