

SUBURETHRAL SLING OPERATION

You have been diagnosed with stress incontinence and are going to undergo a suburethral sling operation. The treatment gives good results and it is a quick procedure, with a short stay in hospital and a short time off work.

Suburethral sling operation (also known as TVT or TOT) is usually carried out under a general anaesthetic. Two small cuts are made in the skin of the abdomen or the groin and one cut is made in the vagina, just beneath the urethra. A small channel is dissected on each side of the urethra, after which a special instrument is used to place a tape under the urethra. The tape will rest completely tension-free under the urethra, hence the name - TVT or Tension-free Vaginal Tape. The tape will rest like a hammock under the urethra, supporting it during straining so there is no leakage of urine. The cuts are then sutured. The whole operation takes approximately 30 minutes.

What can I expect following the surgery ?

A catheter will be left in place for a couple of hours. It will then be removed so that the doctor can check that you are able to pass urine. You may feel a slight discomfort immediately after the operation. This should pass within the next couple of days. After a check-up, if no complications are experienced, you are discharged from the hospital the day after the operation. A common complication following the sling operation is difficulty in passing water. You will be taught by the Continence Nurse to catheterise yourself should this happen. The problem usually settles in a fortnight. About 1 in 10 women notice increased urinary frequency and urgency following surgery, which should either settle on its own or with medication.

In the long term, there is the possibility of the mesh coming through the vaginal skin.

This will then require to be reinserted and would be performed under a general anaesthetic.

What happens when I get home?

You should recover within the next couple of days. We recommend no strenuous activity for four to six weeks. You may resume sexual intercourse at that time.

On discharge from hospital, if you have any queries, please contact the hospital on one of the following numbers:

Doncaster Royal Infirmary

Ward G5 (01302) 553163

Gynaecology Outpatient Clinic (01302) 381361

Bassetlaw Hospital

Ward B7 (01909) 502257

Gynaecology Outpatient Clinic (01909) 502214

Montagu Hospital

Rockingham Ward (01709) 321107

Gynaecology Outpatient Clinic (01709) 321113

24-hour advice line (07775) 823119