

# Pre & Aftercare Information

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## Belly Button Surgery



This information has been provided to enhance your journey through your treatment pathway. We recommend that read this advice and if you are unsure about anything then please do not hesitate to contact us.

General enquiries: 01892 257357 (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm).  
For out of hours emergencies and at weekends, please call 07753 211771.

## Procedure Information

### Preparation before surgery:

- Smoking (cigarettes or e-cigarette with nicotine) - you should avoid or significantly reduce the amount you smoke. Nicotine causes the blood vessels to close up and this effect lasts for 45 - 60 minutes following inhalation. It is one of the most important requirements to lower the risk of postoperative infection and other healing complications. Ideally we would suggest to avoid smoking for a minimum of one month before and after surgery.
- You will require regular pain relief for the first week or two, please ensure you have some paracetamol or ibuprofen available at home also.
- Do NOT take Arnica or herbal tablets 10 days before and 3 days after your surgery. This will significantly reduce your risk of bruising.
- We will provide you with cold compresses and dressings.

## Procedure Information

### The day of surgery

Please DO observe the following on the day of your surgery:

- Enjoy a good meal before attending, unless you are scheduled for twilight sedation or a general anaesthetic.
- Shower the morning of your surgery.
- Wear comfortable clothing.
- Arrange your transport home. We advise you not to drive after the surgery and have someone help to take you home.

## Procedure Information

Immediately after surgery:

After surgery, you will relax in our recovery room. We will provide you with a hot/cold drink and biscuits after surgery. One of our patient coordinators will go through the aftercare and give you instructions on what to expect in the next few days (please always refer to this document).

All the stitches are absorbable. There are internal and external stitches placed and the wound is closed in layers to reduce the tension. It is also an absorbable stitch and as the body dissolves it on the inside, the outer aspect of the stitch will come away.

The area can be quite uncomfortable after the surgery and we will give you painkillers.

You will be given a vaseline dressing to place on the area. This helps the wound to not stick to any clothing. Please continue this process for a few days (until advised by your surgeon). You may have tape on your belly button after surgery. This will remain on until you are seen in the clinic.

We will give you a garment to wear to help to reduce the swelling and this should be worn for at least 6 weeks.

We will make your follow up appointments. This will consist of:

- Approx 1 week follow up with our nurse and wound care specialist (removal of sutures).
- Approx 6 week follow up with your surgeon.
- Approx 6 month follow up with our nurse and wound care specialist.

If you have any concerns our door is always open and more follow up appointments can be scheduled.

## Procedure Information

### Aftercare in the following weeks

- You may experience mild discomfort and swelling. This should last for about a week.
- You may develop bruising around the umbilical area. This will spread and fade over the next few weeks.
- We ask that you shower daily. Avoid baths and swimming pools for at least two weeks and keep the area as dry as possible (use a hair dryer on the cold setting if you can).
- You must keep the area clean as this reduces the risk of infection.
- Apply vaseline dressing for 2 - 3 days on the wound, and remember to take regular painkillers (for a minimum of 48 hours but you can take a week long course depending on your level of discomfort).
- We suggest that you take alternating doses of paracetamol and ibuprofen every 2 hours for a total of 12 hours a day to keep on top of the pain or discomfort.

## Procedure Information

### Photographic examples



A few days after surgery



1 week after surgery



2 weeks after surgery

## Procedure Information

### Frequently Asked Questions

How long will it take to recover?

You will generally be less mobile from between 1 - 2 weeks. This will be due to the swelling. It can be quite uncomfortable in the first 48 hours after surgery and you should take regular painkillers as instructed by your surgical team.

Will the scars be visible?

The scars will be raised and puckered initially. Over the next few weeks - month the scar will start to mature. After surgery the area will be swollen and bruised, you will be able to see the scars as the wound heals, these will become less apparent.

When can I return to work?

This depends on the nature of your job. You should avoid any heavy lifting/ bending and strenuous exercise for a minimum of two weeks. If you have an office job you can return after a few days. Belly Button surgery should not be a painful procedure.

Will the stitches be removed?

All the stitches are absorbable and so do not require removal.

How active can I be after surgery?

You can resume most normal activities as and when you feel comfortable although we recommend that you avoid any heavy lifting, over bending and over stretching for at least two weeks.

When can I resume exercise?

Exercising other than walking is also not advised in the first two weeks post procedure. You can gradually increase to your normal routine from 2 weeks. By 6 weeks you should be back to your normal routine.

Is there any diet advice to help pre and post surgery?

It is essential that you eat and drink as normal post procedure. A nutritionally balanced diet is essential for good wound healing and keeping well hydrated will assist in your recovery.

When can I drive after surgery?

You can resume driving after 48 hours and when you can perform an emergency stop safely.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, queries or concerns.

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