Pilonidal Cyst, Surgery Aftercare

A pilonidal cyst occurs when hairs get trapped (*ingrown*) beneath the skin in the crease between the buttocks over your sacrum (the bone under that crease). Pilonidal cysts are most common in young men with a lot of body hair. When the cyst is breaks (*ruptured*) or leaking, fluid from the cyst may cause burning and itching. If the cyst becomes infected, it causes a painful swelling filled with pus (*abscess*). The pus and trapped hairs need to be removed (often by lancing) so that the infection can heal. The word pilonidal means hair nest.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER YOUR SURGERY

If the pilonidal sinus was NOT DRAINING OR LANCED:

- Keep the area clean and dry. Bathe or shower daily. Wash the area well with a germ-killing soap. Hot tub baths may help prevent infection. Dry the area well with a towel.
- Avoid tight clothing in order to keep area as moisture-free as possible.
- Keep area between buttocks as free from hair as possible. A depilatory may be used.
- Take antibiotics as directed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

If the cyst WAS INFECTED AND NEEDED TO BE DRAINED:

- Your caregiver may have packed the wound with gauze to keep the wound open. This allows the wound to heal from the inside outward and continue to drain.
- Return as directed for a wound check.
- If you take tub baths or showers, repack the wound with gauze as directed following. Sponge baths are a good alternative. Sitz baths may be used three to four times a day or as directed.
- If an antibiotic was ordered to fight the infection, take as directed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- If a drain was in place and removed, use sitz baths for 20 minutes 4 times per day. Clean the wound gently with mild unscented soap, pat dry, and then apply a dry dressing as directed.

If you had surgery and IT WAS *MARSUPIALIZED* (LEFT OPEN):

- Your wound was packed with gauze to keep the wound open. This allows the wound to heal from the inside outwards and continue draining. The changing of the dressing regularly also helps keep the wound clean.
- Return as directed for a wound check.
- If you take tub baths or showers, repack the wound with gauze as directed following. Sponge baths are a good alternative. Sitz baths can also be used. This may be done three to four times a day or as directed.
- If an antibiotic was ordered to fight the infection, take as directed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- If you had surgery and the wound was closed you may care for it as directed. This generally includes keeping it dry and clean and dressing it as directed.

COMPLICATIONS

All surgery may have complications with the very best of care. Some complications of this surgery include:

- Infection.
- Long term drainage.
- Bleeding.
- Possibly further surgery.
- Long term wound care.
- Non healing wound.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have increased pain, swelling, redness, drainage, or bleeding from the area.

- An oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) develops.
- You have muscles aches, dizziness, or a general ill feeling.

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