Pilonidal Cyst

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 *ruptured* (breaks) 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. However, recurrence is common and an operation may be needed to remove the cyst.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If the cyst was **NOT INFECTED**:
  - Keep the area clean and dry. Bathe or shower daily. Wash the area well with a germ-killing soap. Warm tub baths may help prevent infection and help with drainage. Dry the area well with a towel.
  - Avoid tight clothing to keep area as moisture-free as possible.
  - Keep area between buttocks as free of hair as possible. A depilatory may be used.
- If the cyst **WAS INFECTED** and needed to be drained:
  - Your caregiver packed the wound with gauze to keep the wound open. This allows the wound to heal from the inside outwards and continue draining.
  - Return for a wound check in 1 day or as suggested.
  - If you take tub baths or showers, repack the wound with gauze following them. Sponge baths (at the sink) are a good alternative.
  - 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.
  - After the drain is 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.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have increased pain, swelling, redness, drainage, or bleeding from the area.
- An oral temperature above 100.4° F (38° C) develops, or as your caregiver suggests.
- You have muscles aches, dizziness, or a general ill feeling.

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