



Patient Information Leaflet

First & Second Degree Tears and Episiotomy

Produced by:
The Maternity Department

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If you are unable to read this leaflet because English is not your first language, please ask someone who speaks English to telephone PALS on 01983 534850 for further information and help.

Polish:

Jeśli nie jesteś w stanie przeczytać tej ulotki bo angielski nie jest pierwszym językiem, poproś kogoś, kto mówi po angielsku, o kontakt telefoniczny z (PALS 01983 534850) aby uzyskać więcej informacji i pomoc

Russian:

Если вы не можете прочитать этот буклет на английском языке потому что не является первым языке, пожалуйста, попросите кого-нибудь, кто говорит на английском языке для телефонного (PALS 01983 534850) для получения дополнительной информации и помощи

Turkish:

Eğer İngilizce ana diliniz değilse, çünkü bu broşürü okumak için yapamıyorsanız, daha fazla bilgi için 01983 534850 üzerinde PALS telefon İngilizce bilen birine sormak ve yardım lütfen

Bulgarian:

Ако не сте в състояние да прочетете тази листовка, тъй като английският не е първи език, опитайте някой, който говори английски, за да телефонирам (PALS на 01983 534850) за повече информация и помощ

Czech:

Pokud nejste schopni přečíst tuto příbalovou informaci, protože angličtina není vaším rodným jazykem, zeptejte se někoho, kdo mluví anglicky na telefonní PALS na 01983 534850 pro další informace a pomoc

Bengali:

আপনি ইংরেজি আপনার প্রথম ভাষা না থাকার কারণে এই লফিলটে পড়তে অক্ষম হন, তাহলে আরও তথ্যের জন্য 01983 534850 নভেগিশেন PALS টলেফি এন ইংরেজি কথা কটে জিজ্ঞাসা করুন এবং সাহায্য করুন

What is a tear?

A tear may happen naturally as the baby stretches the birth canal (vagina) during birth.

What are the types of tears during childbirth?

Most tears occur in the perineum, the area between the vaginal opening and the back passage (anus).

They may be:

- First degree tears – small, skin-deep tears which usually heal naturally.
- Second degree tears – deeper tears affecting the muscle of the perineum as well as the skin. These usually require stitches.

For some women the tear may be more extensive and involve the back passage, (rectum and anus). This would then be classed as a third or fourth degree tear (see separate leaflet for further information).

What is an episiotomy?

An episiotomy is a cut made by a doctor or midwife through the vaginal wall and perineum to make more space to deliver the baby.

Why is an episiotomy performed?

- In cases of fetal distress to deliver the baby more quickly.
- To prevent uncontrolled tearing of the perineum.
- To give more room in assisted births that require the use of forceps or ventouse (suction).

How will the tear / episiotomy be repaired?

Any tear or episiotomy that requires stitching (sutures) will be repaired soon after birth, under local anaesthetic by your midwife or doctor.

After care

- Usually dissolving stitches are used, so you will not need to have them removed. Stitches should heal in around three to four weeks after the birth. You will need to keep the perineum area clean to avoid infection; when you use the toilet, take care to wipe from front to back.
- Regular bathing or showering is essential. You will need to change your sanitary pad every time you use the bathroom.
- You can try some self-help measures to ease the discomfort. Some women find that cool packs, and herbal remedies can be helpful. You might also want to take a painkilling medicine such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Your muscles may heal more quickly if you practise your pelvic floor muscle exercises regularly after the birth. These exercises are extremely important in helping to restore normal function to your pelvic floor and will reduce swelling and bruising and aid healing.
- Constipation – Try and avoid constipation; it may be normal for you not to open your bowels for a few days but you need to avoid straining. Make sure you eat a good balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.

If you have any concerns regarding issues in this leaflet please discuss with your midwife or GP.

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If you have any queries or concerns about the content of this leaflet please call (01983) 524081 and ask to speak to the relevant department.

If you require this leaflet in another language, large print or another format, please contact the PALS Team, telephone **01983 534850**, who will advise you.

Valuables should not be brought into the hospital. If patients have to bring in valuable items they should ask a nurse to store them safely and request a receipt for the items. You may not be able to have the valuable items returned if the time of discharge from hospital is out of hours.

We are sorry but the Trust cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to items not given for safe keeping.

You can get further information on all sorts of health issues online at: **www.nhs.uk**

For Health advice and out of hours GP service please call the NHS 111 service on: **111**

We Value Your Views On Our Service

If you wish to comment on the care which you, your relative or friend has received, we will be pleased to hear from you. Please speak to the person in charge of the ward, clinic or service in the first instance or ask them to contact the PALS Team. If you wish to contact them directly, telephone on **01983 534850**.

Alternatively you may prefer to write to:

Chief Executive
Isle Of Wight NHS Trust
St Mary's Hospital
Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5TG

You can also share any concerns you have about our services with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on **03000 61 61 61** or at **enquiries@cqc.org.uk**

All NHS sites are no smoking areas.

If you would like help and advice to stop smoking please call: Freephone 0800 169 0 169 to talk to the NHS Smoking Helpline.