Surgical treatment for rectal prolapse

Clinical Sciences Building
Colorectal Surgery
0161 206 1249
What is a rectal prolapse?
A rectal prolapse occurs when the normal supports of the rectum become weakened, allowing the rectum to drop down outside the anus. Sometimes this only happens when you open your bowels, and goes back on its own.

In more severe cases, the rectum may need to be pushed back after opening the bowels, or may even stay outside all the time.

How will the operation help me?
Your surgeon has advised that your rectal prolapse is bad enough or troublesome enough to need an operation.
This may be performed via the abdomen or directly on the prolapse at the anus. The decision to recommend either abdominal or rectal surgery is based on a number of factors including age, physical condition, extent of prolapse and the results of various tests. Your surgeon will discuss this with you.

What preparation is needed before the operation?
You will come into hospital the day of your surgery and you may be given an enema or some medicine to empty the bowel before the operation. Blood may be taken also on the day of your operation.
You will be asked some questions about your general state of health by the nurses and doctors on the ward, and this is a good time to discuss any further questions that you have about the operation.
You will be given some special stockings to wear during and after the operation and an injection each day. This is to help prevent blood clots in your legs.

Normal Rectum

Prolapsed Rectum
What will happen when I come back from the operating theatre?

You will have a drip in your arm and a catheter to drain your bladder. Some discomfort is to be expected.

Painkillers are available and will be given regularly at first: please ask your nurse if you need something to help with discomfort.

When you are awake you will be able to drink as you wish, and when you are drinking well the drip in your arm can come out.

You will usually be able to eat a light meal and get up later that day or the next day. The catheter may stay in your bladder for one or two days.

How will I open my bowels?

After your operation you may be given regular laxatives to soften your stools and stimulate a bowel action. You may not feel the need to open your bowels for a day or two. When you do, you may experience some discomfort and a little bleeding. This is to be expected. You may also find that you have a small mucus discharge from the anus for about a week. Wearing a pad will protect your clothes. Some patients also experience loose stools following this procedure and if this occurs laxatives would not be needed.

It is usual to stay in hospital for up to 3-5 days after your operation this may be slightly different from patient to patient. On discharge you may be given regular laxatives to take if you need them. Patients are encouraged to keep mobile after the procedure, avoid heavy lifting or increased physical activities for up to 2 weeks but this may vary.

Are there any long-term effects of the operation?

In a few cases where someone has weak muscles around the back passage (anal sphincter) and a tendency to difficulty in controlling the bowels, or leakage, this may not improve immediately after the operation. Give it time - it can take several months for things to settle down following surgery.

If you find that you are having difficulties, don’t just put up with it, you should talk to your doctor. Sometimes some exercises to strengthen the sphincter will help.

An operation does not guarantee that a rectal prolapse can never come back. The best way of helping to prevent this is to avoid heavy lifting and straining to open your bowels.

If you have a tendency to constipation, try to increase the amount of fibre in you diet. Fibre forms the structure of cereals, fruit and vegetables. It is not completely digested and absorbed by the body, so it provides bulk to the stools.

This helps the movement of waste through the intestines, resulting in soft stools which are easy to pass.

- You should increase the amount of fibre in your diet gradually - a sudden increase can cause abdominal discomfort and wind
- If fibre in your food is not enough to keep your stool soft then consider taking a fibre supplement, such as Fybogel
- If you become pregnant you will need to take special care not to become constipated
- It is also important to ensure that you drink plenty of fluid. Try to take at least 6-8 glasses
- The fluid you take can be any type, including water, tea, coffee, unsweetened fruit juice, squash or soup
- If you feel that you would like further guidance on diet, your doctor may be able to refer you to a dietitian
What should I do if I want further information?

If you find that you have a problem or any questions immediately after you go home, please call the ward where you had your operation, or contact one of the bowel specialist nurses between the hours of 8am-5pm.

If a problem occurs after a few days at home, please contact your own GP or district nurse for advice. You can also contact the ward you have been on:

B1 Ward

0161 206 2228

B2 Ward

0161 206 0841

Bowel Specialist Nurses between 8am to 5pm

0161 206 1249

Notes
For further information on this leaflet, it’s references and sources used, please contact 0161 206 1249.

Copies of this leaflet are available in other formats (for example, large print or easyread) upon request. Alternative formats may also be available via www.srft.nhs.uk/for-patients/patient-leaflets/

In accordance with the Equality Act we will make reasonable adjustments to enable individuals with disabilities to access this service. Please contact the service/clinic you are attending by phone or email prior to your appointment to discuss your requirements.

Interpreters are available for both verbal and non-verbal (e.g. British Sign Language) languages, on request. Please contact the service/clinic you are visiting to request this.

If you need this information leaflet translated, please telephone:

- Polish: Jeżeli potrzebne jest Państwu to tłumaczenie, proszę zadzwonić pod numer.
- Urdu: اگر آپ کو لازم olduğu ترجمه یا تفسیر یا ترجمه ای اہم انتظامات کے لئے میں اس کو دبائیں.
- Arabic: إذا كنت بحاجة إلى تفسير أو ترجمة هذا الرجاء الاتصال.
- Chinese: 如果需要翻译，请拨打电 0161 206 0224

or Email: InterpretationandTrans@srft.nhs.uk

Salford Royal operates a smoke-free policy.
For advice on stopping smoking contact the Hospital Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 0161 206 1779

This is a teaching hospital which plays an important role in the training of future doctors. The part patients play in this process is essential to make sure that we produce the right quality doctors for all of our futures. If at any time you would prefer not to have students present please inform the doctor or nurses and this will not affect your care in anyway.

Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
Stott Lane, Salford, Manchester, M6 8HD
Telephone 0161 789 7373
www.srft.nhs.uk

If you would like to become a Foundation Trust Member please visit:
www.srft.nhs.uk/for-members

If you have any suggestions as to how this document could be improved in the future then please visit:
http://www.srft.nhs.uk/for-patients