

Haemorrhoid Surgery

What are Haemorrhoids?

Haemorrhoids are vascular cushions within the anal canal. With symptomatic haemorrhoids, patients may experience itchiness, pain, bleeding or prolapse. It is important to note that haemorrhoids are very common.

How are haemorrhoids treated?

Haemorrhoid treatments often starts with increasing fibre in the diet to avoid constipation, drinking more water though the day to avoid dehydration or hard stools, avoiding straining excessively on the toilet and limiting toilet time. Dr Urquhart can also discuss different topical ointments to help with non-surgical treatment of haemorrhoids. Sometimes surgery is required, but it is worth noting that surgery can offer great results. Modern techniques in haemorrhoid surgery aim at treating the underlying condition in a more comfortable way than they have been historically.

What are the options for surgical treatment?

- **Injection of haemorrhoids** – This is utilised for earlier/less severe haemorrhoids and involves either injecting oily phenol or almond oil into the haemorrhoids.
- **Banding of haemorrhoids** – This is utilised from slightly larger haemorrhoids and involves placing small bands internally above the haemorrhoids to help shrink the haemorrhoids and limit blood flow to the haemorrhoids to help prevent bleeding.
- **Haemorrhoid Artery Ligation and Recto Anal Repair (HAL-RAR)** – For larger haemorrhoids, under general anaesthetic, Dr Urquhart utilises an ultrasound or other device to find the haemorrhoid vessel causing the issue and he subsequently places a dissolving stitch internally to prevent bleeding. During this procedure Dr Urquhart can also repair some of the prolapse associated with some larger haemorrhoids.
- **Haemorrhoidectomy** – Occasionally haemorrhoids can be so sizable they require an operation where they are excised under General Anaesthetic.

What does recovery look like following haemorrhoid surgery?

Recovery looks different for everyone but is especially dependent on the type of haemorrhoid surgery one undergoes. Haemorrhoid surgery is painful, but it is considered safe and effective.

- **General Guidelines for recovery:**

Following haemorrhoid surgery, it is quite common for patients to experience pain, discharge, a change in bowel habit and some spotting/bleeding. As you recover, avoid strenuous activity for 1-2 days after your procedure.

- Patients often find sitz baths (salt baths) help. Sitting for about 10 minutes in about 3 inches of warm salty water at least 3 times a day and after every bowel movement helps to sooth the region.
- You may experience some bleeding, discharge, or itching during your recovery. This is normal.
- Avoid constipation by using a laxative or a fibre supplement and eat more high fibre foods. Drink about 8 glasses of water a day, unless directed otherwise.
- Avoid straining with bowel movements as this can increase pressure and irritation which can cause pain and swelling.
- Do not spend too long sitting on the toilet.
- You should take pain relief tablets if you are experiencing any pain. Your recovery will be aided if you are comfortable so take the pain relief tablets as required. However, some painkillers can cause constipation so follow the previous instructions to help avoid this.

- **HAL-RAR:**

- For the first few days after the procedure, you may experience some minor discomfort or throbbing. This is due to the presence of stitches in your rectum. This sensation usually disappears after 4-5 days.
- Occasionally the throbbing is associated with a feeling of needing to go to the toilet when in fact your bowel is empty. This sensation if it occurs is usually gone in a week.
- It is important not to go to the toilet and strain unless you are sure that you need to empty your bowels.
- You may notice a small amount of blood when you do open your bowels. This is normal and nothing to worry about. If you do pass blood on a frequent basis without emptying your bowels you should contact Dr Urquhart to check that it is nothing to worry about.

- You should not experience too much pain but if the discomfort is troubling you either Panadol or Voltaren from your medicine cabinet at home should be sufficient.
- You may not feel the need to open your bowels for a few days after the procedure. This is also normal. If you have not opened your bowels by the third day after the operation, try taking some Coloxyl that evening to gently re-establish normal function.

How do I ease recovery symptoms?

- Sitz baths or regular warm salt baths help to soothe the region.
- Taking pain relief medication when needed.
- Staying well hydrated and eat a high-fibre diet or take fibre supplements.
- Taking stool softeners to avoid constipation and straining.

How long should I take off work?

Recovery is different for everyone, but generally 1-2 weeks is a sufficient amount of time.

Notify the rooms if you are experiencing any of the following:

- High fevers
- Large volume of bleeding
- Increasing pain
- Difficulty passing urine
- If there are any concerns whatsoever please do not hesitate to call the clinic on 1300 008 883.