

A rectocele is a form of pelvic organ prolapse that results in a bulging of the rectum into the back wall of the vagina. A rectocele repair aims to remove the bulge of tissue and reinforce the rectovaginal wall.

Expected Postoperative Effects:

- You may experience drowsiness, fatigue, or dizziness as a result of the anesthetic.
- For the first 2-4 weeks after the procedure, you will very likely experience mild to severe pain, discomfort and throbbing. This is due to the presence of stitches in the rectum and from inflammation post-surgery. You will be prescribed pain medication for this.
- The throbbing can be associated with an urge to open your bowels even when your bowel is empty. This sensation usually ceases within a week or so. It is important not to strain on the toilet as this can impact healing. Ensure you drink plenty of fluids and follow a high fibre diet.
- You will, more than likely, experience some bleeding associated with bowel movements in the postoperative period. This should settle within 2-4 weeks. If you do pass a large volume of blood, or on a frequent basis (without emptying the bowel), please contact the office.
- You may also experience bruising and muscle soreness for the first 1-2 weeks, which should gradually improve.
- You may not feel the need to open your bowels for a few days following the procedure. This is normal. If you have not opened your bowels by the 3rd day post-operatively, try taking some coloxyl that evening to gently re-establish normal function. If this constipation persists beyond 5 days, please contact the office.

To ease these postoperative symptoms, we would recommend taking regular sitz baths/warm salt baths, taking pain relief as required, staying hydrated, eating a high fibre diet, and taking stool softeners to avoid constipation.

Returning to work and activities:

- Most patients require at least 2-4 weeks off from work following the procedure, depending on the nature of your work. Our office can provide a medical certificate if required.
- 2-3 weeks following the procedure, you can recommence light duties such as going for short walks. Gradually increase your activity level as you become more comfortable.
- You should avoid straining when emptying your bowels, and limit your toileting time to 1-3 minutes. Ensure to maintain a high fibre diet and water intake.
- Avoid swimming, biking and strenuous activity for at least 6 weeks.
- You should avoid intercourse for at least 6 weeks.
- You should avoid heavy lifting and strenuous activity for at least 6 weeks. You can gradually increase the amount you can lift by 1kg per week, with max 1kg in the first week, 2kg in the second week, 3kg in the third, and so on.

- Do not drink alcohol, drive, operate heavy machinery, or sign legal documents for at least 24-48 hours, or while on pain medication.

Follow-Up Appointment:

You should call the office on 1300 008 883 to arrange a postoperative appointment with Dr Urquhart. This should be made within 6-8 weeks.

Contact the rooms if you experience any of the following:

- Persistent and increasing pain
- Fever, chills, or high temperature
- Foul-smelling discharge
- Large volume of bleeding
- Difficulty passing urine or bowel movements

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the clinic on 1300 008 883. If you begin to feel unwell after hours, please contact the after-hours nurse at St Vincent's Hospital, or present to your nearest emergency department.