

A resectional rectopexy is a surgical procedure to treat rectal prolapse, a condition where the rectum drops and partially or completely protrudes through the anus. The procedure involves:

1. Resection: Cutting the sigmoid colon, the last part of the colon connected to the rectum
2. Rectopexy: Restoring the rectum to its normal position using stitches

Resection rectopexy can be performed using either an open or laparoscopic approach:

- Open resection rectopexy: A large incision is made in the abdomen to perform the surgery.
- Laparoscopic resection rectopexy: A long camera (laparoscope) and medical instruments are inserted through several small incisions in the abdomen.

Expected Postoperative Effects:

- You may experience drowsiness, fatigue, or dizziness as a result of the anesthetic. This is normal and will take 24-48 hours to settle.
- For the first 1-4 weeks after the procedure, you will very likely experience mild to severe pain, discomfort and throbbing. This is due to the presence of stitches (dissolvable) in your 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.
- The area can be quite swollen/inflamed following the procedure, and it may feel like the haemorrhoids are still present, as they are beginning to shrink. This is normal. It typically takes 1-4 weeks for the area to fully settle, to then allow for the results to be seen.
- You will likely experience some bleeding in the postoperative period. This should settle within 1-4 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 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. Avoid straining on the toilet and limit your toileting time to 1-2 minutes.

Returning to work and activities:

- Most patients require at least 2-4 weeks off from work following the procedure. Our office can provide a medical certificate if required.
- You should avoid straining when emptying your bowels, and limit your toileting time to 1-3 minutes.

- You can return to a regular diet. We recommend a high fibre diet and drinking plenty of fluids, which can help with symptoms of constipation.
- You should avoid heavy lifting and strenuous activity for at least 8 weeks. You can gradually increase the weight you lift each week, with max 1kg during the first week, 2kg in the second week, and so on.
- You should not swim in the ocean or pool for at least 2 weeks.
- You can reintroduce gentle aerobic exercise from 2-4 weeks. If you feel any pain or discomfort with an activity, cease immediately.
- 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 4-8 weeks of your procedure. Please call as soon as possible to arrange this, as appointments are typically booked at least 4 weeks in advance.

Contact the rooms if you experience any of the following:

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

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 via 8382 1111, or present to your nearest emergency department.