Pilonidal Cyst Instructions

You are scheduled to have surgery for a pilonidal cyst (a small pocket or cyst located over the sacral or tailbone area of your body) these cysts frequently become infected and surgery is necessary to obtain complete healing of the cyst itself.

The surgery may be done either on an out-patient basis (you come to the hospital one morning, have surgery, and are discharged after you awaken from the anesthetic) or as a short hospital stay, usually leaving the hospital the morning following surgery. If you have outpatient surgery it will be necessary to come to the hospital the day prior to surgery to have laboratory studies, etc., performed.

In order to allow satisfactory healing without infection the wounds are left open following this type of surgery and are allowed to heal from the bottom to the outside.

The care of the wound is very important. When you leave the hospital there will generally be some type of packing (gauze) in your wound. You will take frequent sitz baths (tub baths in which the involved area is soaked in warm water) both for your comfort and for the cleansing of your wounds. You should take the baths at least 3 times a day and after each bath pack the wound with dry cotton gauze. The gauze does not need to be sterile. Since the gauze will stick to the bottom of the wound (and thereby remove debris from the wound each time it is changed) it may be easier to remove after you have soaked in the warm water for a few minutes. The packing also helps keep the edges of the wound apart so that it heals securely from the bottom. It is normal to have some drainage of pus and blood from the incision for several weeks following surgery.

We suggest that prior to or shortly after your surgery that you purchase or borrow a hand held shower apparatus, such as the “Shower Massage” mad by the Water Pik Company or any similar product. Beginning approximately 10 days to 2 weeks following surgery you may use this device instead of or in conjunction with the sitz baths in order to cleanse the wound. The water is adjusted to a fairly warm temperature and directed into the open wound itself in order to cleanse the wound. The water is adjusted to a fairly warm temperature and directed into the open wound itself in order to cleanse it. This should be done 2 to 3 times daily.

It is essential that you be followed every week or two in our office after this surgery until wounds are completely healed. The purpose of these visits is to insure proper healing of the wound itself as well as allowing us to shave the skin around the surgical site.

Following these instructions carefully will result in faster more secure healing of your wounds. There is, however, a small instance of failure (recurrence) following this or any type of surgery in spite of proper surgical technique and careful follow up care. Your assistance will help us minimize the instance of these failures.