

Word Catheter (Drainage of a Bartholin's Cyst)

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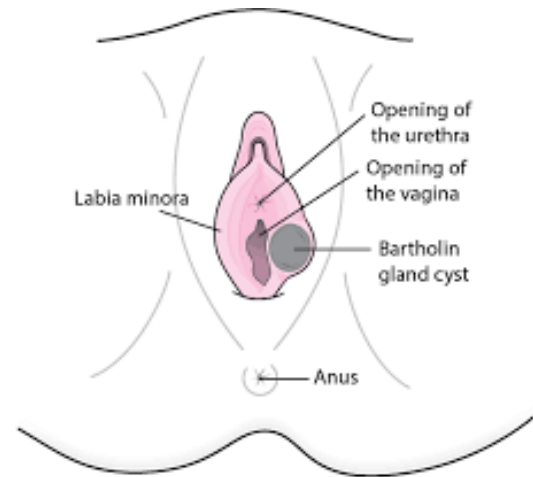
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Department: Gynaecology Services
Document Number: STHK1759
Version: 1
Review date: 01 / 11 / 2024

Why do I need a Word catheter?

You have been diagnosed with a painful swelling of the Bartholin's gland (cyst). If this has become infected it is called an abscess. A Bartholin's cyst or abscess has a typical appearance at the entrance to the vagina. No test is needed to make the diagnosis. Normally the glands produce lubrication that enters the vagina. But when the gland becomes blocked it causes a painful swelling. Symptoms may include tenderness, pain, fever, and sometimes discomfort walking or sitting.



What is Insertion of a Word catheter?

This procedure involves drainage of the cyst or abscess using a small rubber tube called a Word catheter.

First, local anaesthetic is injected to numb the area and to relieve some of the pain you have. Then a small incision is made into the cyst/abscess and the tube is inserted into the abscess. To help it stay in place a small balloon on the end of the tube is inflated with approximately 2 - 3mls of salt water (saline). The fluid/pus will drain out and the cavity will then heal from the base upwards. This helps to reduce the chance of the abscess or cyst coming back again.

What can I expect after the procedure?

You will feel a little sore once the local anaesthetic has worn off, but it should be much better than before the abscess or cyst was drained. If you need any pain relief, you should take your normal pain killers.

The catheter is likely to stay in place for 2 - 6 weeks, until the abscess or cyst has healed.

Normally we will arrange to see you weekly after the catheter has been inserted. Assuming the abscess site is well healed, then the catheter will be very gently removed. Occasionally the catheter falls out before then. If this happens do not worry and just keep your next appointment to be seen.

Please call Ward 3E at Whiston Hospital (24 hours) on 0151 430 1522 if you experience any:

- Increase in bleeding
- Increase in pain
- High temperature
- Increase in swelling/redness
- Smelly discharge from the surgical site

Frequently asked questions

Q. Can I bath and shower as normal?

A. Yes, you may wash as normal, but avoid bubble bath or oils while the wound is healing. Keep the area as clean and dry as possible.

Q. Can I use tampons?

A. Yes, use tampons as normal. Just be careful when inserting and removing tampons that the string does not get caught around the catheter.

Q. Can I have sex with the catheter in?

A. Initially it will probably be too sore, but once it is comfortable you may have sex. This will usually be after a few days or first week.

Q. Will it happen again?


A. Bartholin's cyst or abscess can happen again (recur) after treatment, and in some cases, treatment needs to be repeated. The long-term chance of them coming back is about 1 in 5.

Q. Can Bartholin's cysts or abscesses be prevented?

A. Not usually. Most occur 'out of the blue' for no apparent reason.

Contact details: If you would like any advice, please call the nurses on Ward 3E. They may arrange for a doctor to call you back.

**Ward 3E, Gynaecology
Telephone 0151 430 1522
(24 Hours)**



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