

Radical prostatectomy

Radical prostatectomy is an operation to remove the prostate gland and the seminal vesicles attached to it, the part of the urethra that passes through the prostate gland, and if necessary, the lymph nodes in the pelvic floor. The bladder is attached to the urethra above the sphincter muscle. The operation is performed endoscopically. The length of hospital stay depends on the surgical procedure used.

During the procedure, an indwelling urinary catheter is inserted and left in place for about two weeks to ensure healing of the urethral incision. After about two weeks, the catheter is removed at the Surgical Outpatient Clinic. You will be able to go home on the day the catheter is removed.

Care for an indwelling urinary catheter

The urinary catheter has a small water-filled balloon at one end to keep the catheter in place in the bladder. The catheter is connected to a bag that collects the urine. The bag should be emptied at least every morning and night, and whenever needed. To ensure healing of the urethral incision it is very important that urine is allowed to flow freely from the bladder into the bag. To avoid risk of infection, the urine collection bag must be kept below the level of the bladder. Wash your hands before and after handling the collection bag. The collection bag is replaced once a week.

Urinary continence (ability to hold urine)

Urine leakage may occur once the catheter is removed, but the ability to hold urine will improve gradually over the next few months. You can improve your ability to hold urine by performing pelvic floor exercises as instructed. Doing pelvic floor exercises will not give any benefit while the urinary catheter is in place. If you start having trouble urinating or are unable to pass urine, contact Surgical ward 1. After surgery, a catheter may only be inserted in the urethra by a urologist, or by another healthcare professional who has been given permission to do so by a urologist, until 6 months have passed since the procedure.

Hygiene

You may shower as normal, and you may let water run down over your incision. If there are any stitches or clips in the incision that need to be removed, you will be given an appointment for their removal when you are discharged. Stitches/clips may be removed by a nurse at your health care centre. Wash your private parts thoroughly every morning and every night. You may start taking sauna baths about a month after the operation. If you are experiencing incontinence, you may use incontinence pads that are available from supermarkets or pharmacies.

Intake of fluids

As long as there is blood in the urine, you should drink lots of fluids, about 1.5-2 litres a day, unless you have been told to restrict your fluid intake because of some other illness. You may reduce your fluid intake to normal if there is no visible blood in the urine. If blood reappears in the urine or if you stop passing urine, contact Surgical Ward 2.

Bowel function

Make sure you have regular bowel movements since straining related to constipation may cause bleeding. A diet high in fibre and a sufficient intake of fluids promotes regular bowel function. Enemas and suppositories are not allowed, and strong laxatives must not be taken until the urethral incision has healed.

Avoiding physical exertion

You may engage in normal outdoor activities. Strenuous physical exertion should be avoided for about two months after the operation. Your doctor will decide how much sick leave you need.

Sex life

Every effort will be taken to perform the procedure so that normal sex life is still possible. The nerves that control erectile function run right next to the surgical area and may therefore be damaged. Erectile function may be restored with medication.

Follow-up appointments

You will have regular cancer follow-up appointments at the Urological Outpatient Clinic. The first follow-up appointment will take place about three months after the operation. You will be informed of your follow-up appointment times and given instructions when you are discharged. You will be informed of the results of the tissue biopsy taken during the procedure when the catheter is removed or at the follow-up appointment.

Contact information

Surgical Ward 2
Tel. 02 627 6450

Satasairaala

[For Satasairaala's website, go to www.satasairaala.fi](http://www.satasairaala.fi)

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