

## Sling surgery for urinary incontinence

You have an appointment at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology for a sling surgery. The goal of the operation is to improve stress urinary incontinence. The operation is carried out as a day surgery.

### Preparing for the operation

**Preparation for the surgery starts at home.** Read more on [Preparing for a gynaecological surgical procedure](#). **Arrive at the hospital according to the instructions in your appointment letter on the morning of the operation.**

### Sling surgery

The operation is carried out under **regional anesthesia**, and if necessary, you will receive intravenous pain medication. During the operation, a strip of mesh is inserted to support the urethra through incisions that are approximately 1 centimeter in length. Two incisions are made above the pubic bone on the lower abdomen or the groin, and a third incision is made on the vaginal mucosa, below the urethra. The incisions are closed using absorbable sutures.

### After the procedure at the hospital

Appropriate pain management is always a part of a surgical procedure, and you can continue pain management at home if necessary. After about three hours have passed from the operation, you will be asked to go to the toilet to urinate. The amount of residual urine in the bladder is verified with an ultrasound or by using a catheter.

You can leave the hospital when you have urinated successfully and you feel well enough to do so. **Sick leave** is prescribed for 5 to 7 days.

### At home after the procedure

**It is normal if passing urine becomes slower after the procedure.** Emptying the bladder requires sitting patiently, shifting your posture, and relaxing. Straining too much makes urinating harder, because the sling can tighten.

You can remove the **medical tape on the day after the procedure**. Spraying the incisions with water can patting the area dry carefully is sufficient. The sutures are absorbed in a couple of weeks. We recommend that you wash your genital area every time after you have used the toilet. **Due to a risk of infection**, we recommend that you avoid swimming/bathing in a bathtub, using tampons and period cups, and intercourse for 2 weeks.

Urinary incontinence problems can recur with time, which is why we recommend that you continue doing **pelvic muscle exercises as a preventative measure**. You can start exercising and return to your sports activities after a month has passed since your surgery. Sports is also a good way to control weight gain; being overweight increases the risk of the urinary incontinence recurring.

## **Possible problems**

Contact the hospital where your surgery was performed if your body temperature reaches over 37.5 degrees repeatedly or you experience difficulty urinating (difficulty passing urine, increased need to urinate, burning sensation) during your sick leave.