

# Gynaecology

## Hysterectomy

A hysterectomy is a surgical procedure to remove the womb (uterus). You'll no longer be able to get pregnant after the operation.

If you have not already gone through the menopause, you'll no longer have periods, regardless of your age.

Many women have a hysterectomy. It's more common for women aged 40 to 50.

Hysterectomies are carried out to treat health problems that affect the female reproductive system.

These include:

- heavy periods
- long-term pelvic pain
- non-cancerous tumours (fibroids)
- ovarian cancer, uterine cancer, cervical cancer or cancer of the fallopian tubes

A hysterectomy is a major operation with a long recovery time and is only considered after less invasive treatments have been tried.



## Guidance for patients

There are various types of hysterectomy. The type you have depends on why you need the operation and how much of your womb and surrounding reproductive system can safely be left in place.

The main types of hysterectomy are:

total hysterectomy – the womb and cervix (neck of the womb) are removed; this is the most commonly performed operation

subtotal hysterectomy – the main body of the womb is removed, leaving the cervix in place

total hysterectomy with bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy – the womb, cervix, fallopian tubes (salpingectomy) and ovaries (oophorectomy) are removed



radical hysterectomy – the womb and surrounding tissues are removed, including the fallopian tubes, part of the vagina, ovaries, lymph glands and fatty tissue

There are 3 ways to carry out a hysterectomy:

laparoscopic hysterectomy (keyhole surgery) – where the womb is removed through several small cuts in the tummy

vaginal hysterectomy – where the womb is removed through a cut in the top of the vagina

abdominal hysterectomy – where the womb is removed through a cut in the lower tummy



A hysterectomy is a major operation. You can be in hospital for up to 5 days after surgery, and it takes about 6 to 8 weeks to fully recover.

Recovery times can also vary depending on the type of hysterectomy.

Rest as much as possible during this time and do not lift anything heavy, such as bags of shopping. You need time for your abdominal muscles and tissues to heal.

### Keeping well while you wait for your operation

Main symptoms include :

- heavy periods
- long-term pelvic pain

If your symptoms are worsening, please contact the number provided on your letter correspondence from Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital or alternatively call

Gynaecology Outpatients: 0121 335 8102 who will be able to help.

If you are experiencing sudden and unexpected pelvic pain please call 111 for advice.

### Contact us

Please contact the number provided on your letter correspondence from Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital or alternatively call

Gynaecology Outpatients: 0121 335 8102 who will be able to help.

There is also a range of information and patient leaflets available on our website - <https://bwc.nhs.uk>

