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Urinary Incontinence after Prostate Surgery

The underlined terms are listed in the glossary.

Prostate surgery increases the risk of stress urinary incontinence (SUI). This is because the prostate surrounds the urethra, helping it to resist the pressure of a full bladder. If your prostate is partially or completely removed this may have an effect on how much pressure the urinary sphincter can resist.

There are several treatment options to improve SUI after prostate surgery. The most common treatments are:

- Pelvic floor muscle exercises
- Sling implantation
- Artificial compression devices (balloon insertion)
- Artificial Urinary Sphincter implantation (AUS)

Pelvic floor muscle exercises

The pelvic floor muscles support the bladder and the bowel. They can weaken with age, illness, hormonal changes, or after prostate surgery. Weak pelvic floor muscles can lead to urine leakage.

A structured programme of exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles can improve urinary incontinence. It consists of a series of exercises to train the muscles, which are designed specifically for your needs.



Download general instructions on pelvic floor muscle exercises from the website at <http://patients.uroweb.org/library-ui/>

Always consult your health care professional before trying these exercises.

Sling implantation

Slings provide support to the pelvic floor muscles and help the urethra to better resist the pressure of a full bladder. Sling implantation aims to cure SUI by compressing the urethra or repositioning the urethra in relation to the bladder neck. The goal of both techniques is to prevent urine leakage.

There are various of slings, like two armed slings, four-armed slings and adjustable ones. Slings can be synthetic, or made of human or animal tissue. You can discuss with your doctor which option is best for you.

Which type of sling is recommended for you depends on your individual situation and needs. It also depends on the availability of different types of slings in your hospital and your surgeon's experience with them.

Artificial compression devices (balloon insertion)

Artificial compression devices, also known as balloons, are a common treatment for mild to moderate SUI. They compress the urethra just below the bladder neck so that it can better resist the pressure of a full bladder. The goal of the balloons is to reduce urine leakage during activities such as sneezing, coughing, running, or lifting.

The artificial compression device consists of a balloon which can hold fluid, a small titanium port, and a tube that connects the port to the balloon. The port allows the doctor to regulate the amount of fluid in the balloon. Two balloons are inserted on either side of the urethra during a minimally-invasive procedure.

Artificial Urinary Sphincter implantation

Artificial urinary sphincter implantation, or AUS, is a common treatment for moderate to severe stress urinary incontinence. With the help of a hand-controlled pump, the AUS allows you to control your bladder by compressing and releasing a cuff around the urethra. The goal of the AUS is to reduce urine leakage during activities such as sneezing, coughing, running, or lifting.

This leaflet offers basic information about treatment options for SUI after prostate surgery. You can read more in-depth information about these procedures in the leaflet *Surgical Treatment for Men with Stress Urinary Incontinence*.

This information was updated in November 2014.

This leaflet is part of EAU Patient Information on Urinary Incontinence. It contains general information about diagnosis and assessment of the condition and available treatment options. If you have any specific questions about your individual medical situation you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. No leaflet can replace a personal conversation with your doctor.

This information was produced by the European Association of Urology (EAU) in collaboration with the EAU Section of Female and Functional Urology (ESFFU), and the European Association of Urology Nurses (EAUN).

The content of this leaflet is in line with the EAU Guidelines.

You can find this and other information on urological diseases at our website: <http://patients.uroweb.org>

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