



**ROCHESTER
GENERAL
SURGERY**

What is a pilonidal cyst?

A pilonidal cyst is a sac or pocket filled with hair and debris that forms at the top of the gluteal cleft or top of the buttock. The cyst can become extensive, often down to the tailbone. Pilonidal cysts can form if there is a small opening or skin puncture from an embedded hair.

Who gets pilonidal cysts?

Anyone can get a pilonidal cyst. Risk factors that make a person more susceptible are sitting for prolonged periods of time, being overweight, having thick body hair or a family history of cysts.

What are symptoms?

Tailbone pain, lumps, drainage (pus or blood), or inflamed skin can be symptoms. Cysts can become infected requiring incision and drainage.

Who needs surgery?

There is little non-surgical treatment for pilonidal cysts that are symptomatic. Performing good hygiene, keeping the area clean, dry and hair-free can help. If symptoms persists despite the above measures surgery is required.

What does surgery entail?

Pilonidal cyst surgery requires cutting out the cyst including the skin containing pilonidal pits and hair. Surgery can be extensive depending on the size of the cyst. There are many different techniques ranging from leaving the skin open with packing to complex, tension-free flap closures.

What is a typical post-operative course?

You can expect some pain and discomfort. You will be sent home with pain medication. Every person has a different tolerance for pain and your exact pain medication regimen should be discussed with your surgeon. You will be on light activity and minimal lifting for the first two weeks. Each person and surgery are different so activity restrictions beyond two weeks may differ from person to person. If you have stitches they are usually removed at two weeks.

How do I know if something is wrong?

Swelling and bruising is normal. As stated above, pain is also expected. If you have ongoing bleeding, redness, fever, drainage or significant pain not relieved by pain medication please call your surgeon.