

Bladder and Urethral Surgery:

Discharge instructions for TVT and TOT procedures

What is a TVT or TOT procedure?

TVT (tension-free vaginal tape) and TOT (transobturator tape) are procedures that lift a woman's sagging bladder or urethra into normal position. During surgery, a narrow band of tape is placed under the urethra. The tape supports the urethra and bladder like a hammock.

What can I expect after a TVT or TOT procedure?

You will rest at the clinic or hospital for a few hours before you go home. Your nurses will encourage you to walk around as soon as possible. This helps prevent blood clots. Your nurses will also give you instructions on how to care for yourself at home.

How do I care for myself at home?

Recovery is different for every woman. It can take anywhere from 1 to 4 weeks to fully recover. How well you heal depends a lot on how well you follow your doctor's instructions. Here's what you can expect:

- **You will have some pain.** Take all pain medicines exactly as prescribed by your doctor. This will keep your pain from getting worse and make it easier to manage. **It will not take away your pain completely.** You can use ice or cold packs to decrease pain and swelling. Apply the ice to the surgical site for 20 minutes and then take it off for 20 minutes. (Never put ice directly on your skin.)
- **You may have constipation from the pain medicine.** You can take a mild laxative or stool softener. Drinking 6 to 8 glasses of water a day will help keep your stool soft.



When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if you have any of these symptoms:

- You continue to have blood in your urine, or if the amount of blood seems to be increasing, rather than decreasing.
- Can't urinate, or have ongoing difficulty urinating
- Have problems with your catheter, or with self-catheterizing
- Have bloody, cloudy, or foul-smelling urine
- Have burning, painful, or frequent urination
- Ongoing red bleeding from your incision. (It's normal to have a small amount of bloody discharge, but not red bleeding.)
- Redness, swelling, separation, odor, or yellowish drainage from your incision.
- Fever of 100.5° F (38.0° C) or higher.
- Flu-like symptoms (chills, body ache, fatigue, or headache).
- You become more tired (rather than less) each day, or if you're dizzy for more than a few seconds at a time.
- Any increase in your pain, or if pain medicine isn't working
- A lot of bloating or swelling in your abdomen
- Pain, redness, or swelling in one leg, or in your groin

GET EMERGENCY CARE if you have chest pain, a cough (not from a cold), or trouble breathing.

- **You will likely have a small amount of blood in your urine for the first day or so.** (A small amount of blood will make your urine slightly pink.) It should go away over the next few days.
 - Do not use douche or tampons. Ask your doctor when it's okay to do so.
 - Wipe from front to back after going to the bathroom. This helps prevent infection.
- **The incisions in your abdomen or groin will be covered with special tape.** You may take a shower after the first 48 hours. Do NOT soak in a bath, hot tub, or swimming pool. Wait until your surgical strips are off and your incision is well-healed.
- **You may feel tired for a few days after your procedure.** Try to get at least 8 hours of sleep each night and take rest periods throughout the day.
- **You might have trouble urinating at first.** Also, your urine stream may not flow out as forcefully as it did before. You may also feel urgency (a strong need to urinate), but this should go away as you heal. To help with urination:
 - Don't strain or bear down while going to the bathroom. This can damage the area of your recent procedure.
 - Urinate while sitting in a 2 to 3 inches of warm water. **Avoid getting your incision wet if it hasn't healed yet.**
 - Don't let your bladder get too full. It's easier if you urinate more often.
 - Do Kegel exercises to strengthen the muscles around your vagina, bowel, and bladder:
 - Tighten the muscles you use to stop the flow of urine.
 - Hold for a count of ten, then relax the muscles slowly.
 - Repeat several times a day, working up to 100 Kegels a day.

- **If you go home with a catheter in place,** follow the nurse's instructions for caring for the catheter and drainage bag. Do any exercises you've been taught. And make sure you know when and how the catheter will be removed.

If you need to self-catheterize, a nurse will teach you how before you leave the hospital. Be sure to self-catheterize as often as instructed — usually every 3 to 4 hours during the day.

- **You can go back to your normal routine when your doctor says it's okay.** Be sure to go to all of your follow-up appointments so your doctor can see how you are healing.



Your follow-up appointment

Date/Time: _____

Place: _____

Doctor: _____

Instructions from my doctor:

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