

# Groin Dissection

(Ilioinguinal lymphadenectomy)

## For patients preparing for surgery

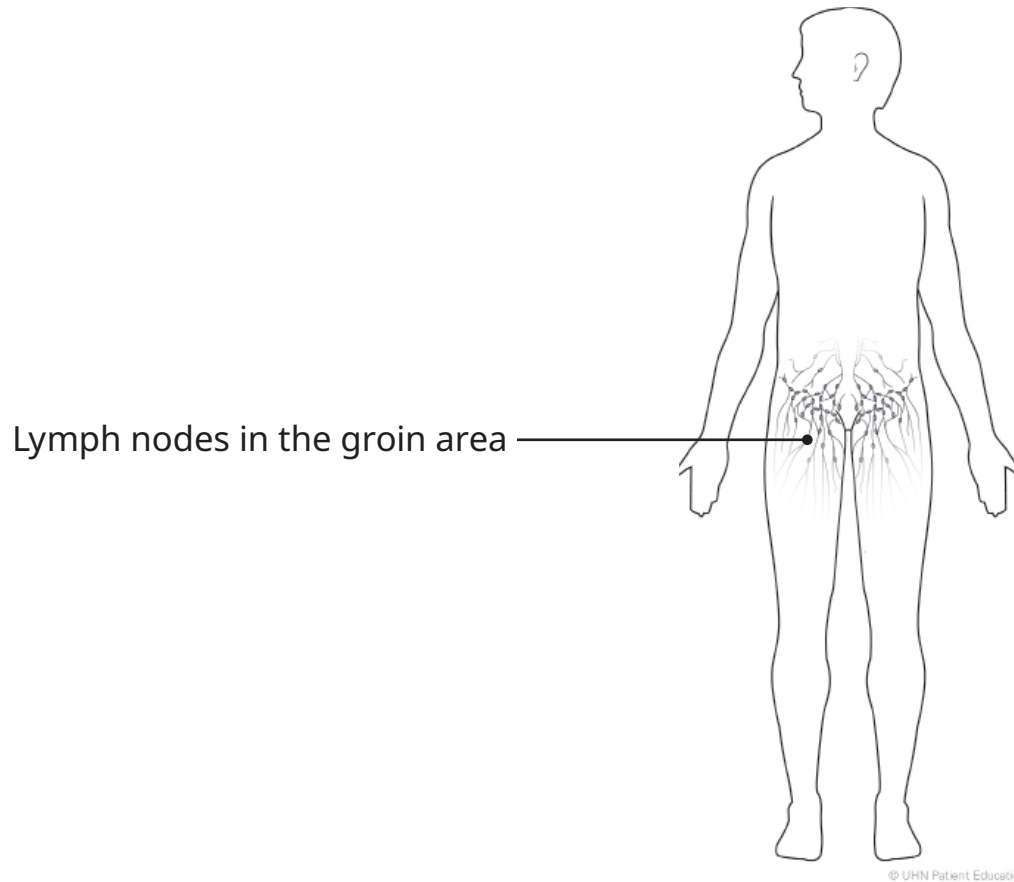
Read this brochure to learn more about:

- What to expect before, during and after surgery
- How to take care of yourself at home
- Problems to watch for
- Who to contact in case of emergency



## What is a groin dissection?

A groin dissection is surgery to remove the **lymph nodes** from one or both sides of the groin area. Lymph nodes are part of the body's immune system, which helps to fight infections. The lymph nodes remove waste and damaged cells, and can contain cells that fight infections.



## Why am I having this surgery?

You may be having surgery to see if the cancer has spread to the nodes. This is called **superficial inguinal groin dissection**.

Or, you may be having surgery to remove cancer that is already in the lymph nodes. This is called **deep inguinal groin dissection**.

## Getting ready for surgery

### What happens before surgery?

- You will have an appointment at the Pre-Admission Clinic.
- During your visit we test your blood. We do an ECG (electrocardiogram is a record of your heart's electrical activity), a chest x-ray, or both. You might also see an anesthetist and a medical doctor during this appointment.
- We will teach you how to do deep breathing and coughing exercises and a special exercise called Incentive Spirometry. These exercises after your surgery help get air into your lungs and lower your chances of getting pneumonia.
- We may also start you with bowel preparation. Depending on what kind of surgery you're having, we'll ask you to drink clear fluids, take a laxative, and/or an enema.

### What to do the day before my surgery

- Only drink fluids.
- If we gave you a laxative, take it as directed.
- Do not eat or drink anything for at least 6 hours before the surgery.  
**Your stomach must be empty.**

## Your hospital stay

Arrive **2 hours** before your scheduled surgery  
Sprott Surgical Admission Unit (SAU)  
Peter Munk Building – 2nd Floor, Toronto General Hospital

A nurse prepares you for surgery. We give you an intravenous (IV) needle. This is a small needle that we put in a vein in your arm. We use it to give you:

- fluids
- antibiotics
- pain medicine

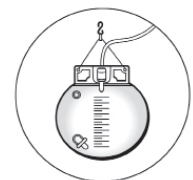
### What to expect after the surgery

You wake up in the Post-Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU). Once you are stable, we move you back to the nursing unit. When you wake up, you will be attached to some tubes:

**IV:** To give you fluids and medicines.

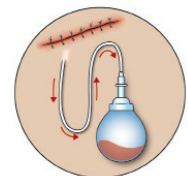


**Foley catheter:** A tube that goes into your bladder to drain urine. It might cause muscle spasms in your bladder that give you cramps. You may feel like your bladder is full and you need to urinate.



We can give you suppositories to help with the cramping feeling and pills to help with the bladder spasms.

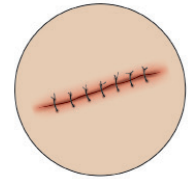
**JP drain (Jackson Pratt drain):** A tube that we put in your groin area to drain any extra fluid. It's removed when you no longer need it. We usually take it out in 1 to 3 days.



**Oxygen:** We usually give patients oxygen while they are still in the help with breathing. We use nasal prongs or a clear plastic mask. We remove the oxygen before you return to the nursing unit or the day after your surgery.



**Staples:** The staples along your incision line will be taken out 7 days after your surgery. We might also give you support stockings while you are in the operating room to prevent your legs from swelling.



## How will I feel?

Although your incision (cut) may be large, we can help control your pain with medicine. We will give you either Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA), which is a pump that you control yourself, or an epidural. We can give you more information about different kinds of pain relief.

The muscle spasms in your bladder might be uncomfortable. We can give you suppositories to help relieve the spasms. Once you can drink, we can also give you another medicine called Ditropan.

A few days after your surgery, you will probably start to have gas pain. The best thing to do is walk or move your body to relieve the pain.

## How do I take care of myself after surgery?

- If you had a deep groin dissection, you may need to stay in bed for 2 or 3 days to give yourself time to heal.
- If you had a superficial groin dissection, you should walk the first day after your surgery. A nurse will help you.
- You will start doing deep breathing and coughing exercises. You should also do Incentive Spirometry. A nurse will show you how to do this exercise.
- Wiggle your toes while you are in bed. This helps the blood to flow through your legs.
- Take showers instead of baths. A nurse will help you shower while you are in hospital.

## Recovering after surgery

### How do I take care of myself when I leave the hospital?

- You can do your usual everyday activities when you feel ready. If you are getting tired easily, listen to your body and don't push yourself.
- Take short walks to help with blood flow and to lower the chance of getting blood clots.
- Take showers instead of baths.
- Do not put creams on your incision (cut). Wash with soap and water and pat the incision area dry.

### Swelling and tenderness

After surgery you may have swelling and tenderness in the groin area.

To help with the swelling:

- Raise your scrotum while you are sitting and standing.
- Wear briefs underwear. They support the scrotum and help ease swelling.

If you had a deep groin dissection, the swelling in your legs may be an ongoing problem. Talk to your doctor if you have any questions.

### Who to call

Call your surgeon's office to make or change appointments and not to ask medical or surgical questions. Please do not call the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre Clinic with questions about recovery after surgery. Call the nursing unit directly.

## Call the 10 ES nursing unit if you have:

- Heavy bleeding when you urinate (pee) and the blood is bright red (not dark old blood), and the bleeding does not decrease when you rest and drink more water
- A fever (temperature higher than 38 °C or 101 °F)
- Redness or pain at your incision site



**Go to the emergency department if you have pain, redness or swelling in your calf or inner thigh area.**

## Your follow-up appointment

You will visit with your doctor in about 4 weeks.

## How to contact us

|                                     |                               |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Dr. Finelli                         | Phone: 416 946 2851           |
| Dr. Fleshner                        | Phone: 416 946 2989           |
| Dr. Hamilton                        | Phone: 416 946 2909           |
| Dr. Kulkarni                        | Phone: 416 946 2246           |
| Dr. Perlis                          | Phone: 416 946-2957           |
| Dr. Zlotta                          | Phone: 416 586 4800 ext. 3910 |
| 10 ES nursing unit                  | Phone: 416 340 3521           |
| Clinical Coordinator, Leah Jamnicky | Phone: 416 340 4666           |



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