
INCISION AND DRAINAGE OF ABSCESS

Definition

This procedure involves making an opening into an infected mass.

Purpose of Procedure

The reason this procedure is done is to allow drainage and identification of bacteria present to aid in treatment with appropriate antibiotics.

Preparation

If you are on medications that must be taken, you will have discussed this with us. *Please refer to the attached list and tell us if you took any of these within the past 10 days.* If your new medication is not on the list, alert us immediately so that we may ensure optimal procedure safety. We will have reviewed all of your current medications with you during the pre-operative / pre-procedure consultation. You are obligated to inform us if anything has changed (medication or otherwise) since your previous visit.

Procedure

This procedure involves making an opening in the skin overlying the inflammatory mass. The incision is made along natural skin lines to reduce the appearance of a scar. The abscess is then drained and cultures are taken to determine the appropriate antibiotic therapy. Temporary packing may be used to help keep the wound from healing before the infection is controlled. A surgical dressing is applied.

Post Procedure

Following this procedure pain medication will be used to manage discomfort. Packing will be changed in a few days and progressively less packing will be reapplied until the wound appears to be healing satisfactorily. At that point, instructions for care at home will be given to you by your physician. The wound may take day to weeks to heal.

Postoperative pain medications may include a codeine type medication that may cause drowsiness. Operation of motor vehicles or machinery is not allowed while using this medication. Returning to work or school should be expected within a day or two depending on the severity of the abscess.

Expectations of Outcome

This procedure should result in healing of the abscess. If a part of the cavity remains, further surgery may be needed.

Possible Complications

Incision and drainage of an abscess is a safe procedure, however, there are uncommon risks that may be associated with it. While we have discussed these and possibly others in your consultation, we would like you to have a list so that you may ask questions if you are still concerned. It is important that every patient be made aware of possible outcomes that may include, but are not limited to:

- Bleeding
- Infection
- Scarring
- Recurrence of the infection

We provide this literature for patients and family members. It is intended to be an educational supplement that highlights some of the important points of what we have previously discussed in the office. Alternative treatments, the purpose of the procedure/surgery, and the points in this handout have been covered in our face-to-face consultation(s).