

## SURGICOM PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET



### AORTO BI-FEMORAL BYPASS GRAFT

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

You have a blockage or partial blockage in the aorta, the main blood vessel that comes from the heart or of one of its branches in the pelvis which supplies blood to the lower limbs. The cause is usually atherosclerosis and/or blood clot which has formed.

#### COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Most patients present with pain in the legs when walking.
- Rest pain in the feet may be present.

#### DIAGNOSIS

- A duplex Doppler gives much information about the disease.
- An angiogram is very useful too.

#### TREATMENT

- At times it is justified keeping an eye on the disease.
- When the disease interferes with work or pleasure activities, then it is usually time to consider surgical treatment.
- Your doctor has decided to recommend surgical treatment for your disease.

#### PRE-OPERATIVE PREPARATION

- You will be checked carefully for other possible problems, especially problems with other arteries in your body.
- Do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before the operation.
- Your doctor will advise when he needs you to be admitted.
- Make sure your doctor knows what medicines you take, especially medicines which may affect blood clotting.

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### OPERATION

- This operation requires a general anaesthetic.
- During the operation the blocked vessels will be bypassed with a graft made from synthetic material.
- If it is necessary you will receive a blood transfusion. This however is usually not necessary.
- The operation usually takes a few hours.

### POST OPERATIVE CARE

- Most patients are nursed for a period in an intensive care unit.
- Your pain will be controlled either with an epidural catheter or other medicine.
- If you do well you will start taking liquids by mouth after a few days.
- When you are well enough you will be transferred to your normal hospital bed.

### COMPLICATIONS

1. This is a serious operation and complications do sometimes occur. You must be aware of the following possible complications.
2. There is a significant chance that your sexual potency will be affected by this operation.
3. Damage to abdominal organs during the operation is possible but rare.
4. Occasionally this operation affects the blood supply to the large bowel or kidneys and this can lead to further complications.
5. An intra-abdominal bleed after the operation is possible. If this happens it will necessitate further surgery.
6. The operation may cause problems with the blood supply to the legs, feet or toes. If this happens amputations may be necessary.
7. Systemic complications like chest infections, stroke, heart attack, deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism are possible.

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