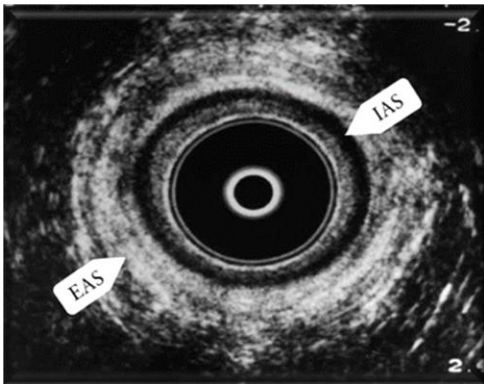


Review of Sphincter healing

- The best way to check healing of the anal sphincter is with a specialised ultrasound, called an endoanal ultrasound.
- During this examination, which takes only a few minutes, a narrow probe is placed into the lower 2-3 cm of the anal entrance so tissue healing can be easily assessed.
- This examination is not painful but can be a little uncomfortable if some of your stitches have not yet dissolved.
- The endoanal ultrasound is performed between 6 to 12 months after the birth in the Anal Ultrasound and Physiology Clinic at Westmead. If you do not hear from the Clinic about your appointment, please ring 8890 7668 to check your referral has been received.



For more information visit our website by scanning the QR code below



We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way on continually improving our service.

Send your feedback to:

wslhd-wmdwrnhwebsite@health.nsw.gov.au



Need an Interpreter?

Please let us know if you would like an interpreter. Professional interpreters are available if you need help to communicate with staff. Our staff can also ask for an interpreter. The service is free and confidential. We will book the interpreter for you.

You can also call the **Translating and Interpreting Service** on **131 450** if you need to speak to us before your appointment.



Health
Western Sydney
Local Health District

Management of third and fourth degree tears

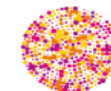


Phone call appointment

Day: _____
Time: _____
Physio: _____



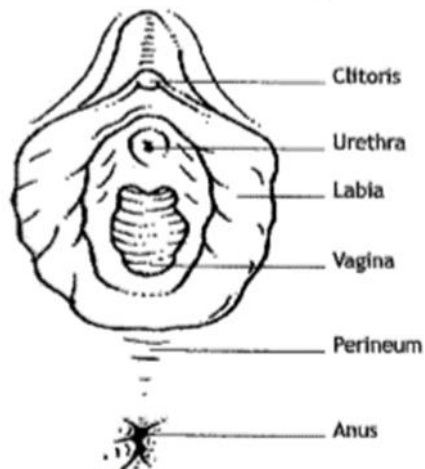
WSP289 V3/Feb 2022



Women's &
Newborn Health
Westmead Hospital

What is a third or fourth degree tear?

- Many women have tearing of the tissues between the vagina and anus (back passage) during the birth of their baby.
- If these tears extend into the anal sphincter muscle around the anus, they are called a third or fourth degree tear.
- The anal sphincter muscle helps control flatus (wind) and faeces or bowel motions, so it is very important it heals well.



Ways to assist healing

- Good hygiene- keep the area clean, wash and pat dry after each visit to the toilet.
- Regular ice packs wrapped in a damp cloth will help reduce swelling. Apply ice packs to your perineum for up to 10-20 minutes at a time and change every 2 hours.
- Use a sanitary pad or toilet paper to support the stitches when you open your bowels.

Avoiding constipation

- It is important to avoid constipation as straining can cause the repair to break down.
- Drink plenty of water, at least 2-2.5 litres per day.
- High fibre diet such as fruit, vegetables, wholegrain breads, and cereals.
- Take a fibre supplement such as psyllium, Fybogel, Normacol, Metamucil or Movicol every day for at least 3 months as complete healing takes several months.
- Avoid painkillers containing codeine (Panadeine, Codral) and oxycodone (Endone) as these can cause constipation.
- For most women, paracetamol, and anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen (Nurofen) are the best painkillers.

Healing of stitches

- Once you return home, if there is an increase in pain where the stitches are or any discharge from the anus, please contact the Westmead Hospital **Women's Health Clinic on 8890 6508.**

Pelvic Floor exercises

- Pelvic floor muscle exercises are important for all women after having a baby and can be started soon after birth.
- These are in the 'Physiotherapy Exercises Before and After Birth' booklet. You can view this information by scanning the QR code below.



Physiotherapy review

- If you are having difficulty controlling wind or bowel motions you can contact the **Women's Health physiotherapist at Westmead on 8890 6500, Blacktown on 9881 8302 or Auburn on 8759 3177/6.**
- A Physiotherapist will contact you around 6 weeks after giving birth (Please refer to appointment time on front of pamphlet).
- You can make an appointment with the physiotherapist if you are having any problems with urine leakage.