

# Pyloromyotomy

PS13 Lite - Expires end of January 2025



This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

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## What is pyloric stenosis?

Pyloric stenosis is a condition that prevents your baby's stomach from emptying properly and usually results in your baby vomiting soon after a feed, before the food can pass through the stomach. Because most of the goodness from a feed is absorbed into the body after the food has passed through the stomach, your baby will become dehydrated and lose salts. This can be life-threatening and needs to be treated promptly.

Pyloric stenosis is caused by the valve muscle thickening. It is not known why this happens in some babies.

## What are the benefits of surgery?

Your baby should be able to feed normally after about 2 days.

## Are there any alternatives to surgery?

If your baby is dehydrated, your surgeon may recommend giving them fluid and salts through a drip in a vein but this will not treat pyloric stenosis.

## What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes about an hour.

Your surgeon may place a tube (nasogastric or NG tube) into your baby's nostrils and into their stomach to remove any fluid. Your surgeon will make a cut on the upper abdomen or just above the belly button so they can get to the pyloric muscle. They will split the pyloric muscle and spread it apart to open the passage into the intestines. The muscle will heal.

## What complications can happen?

Some complications can be serious and can even cause death.

### General complications of any operation

- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication

### Specific complications of this operation

- Vomiting after the operation
- Making a hole in the mucosa (the lining of the stomach)
- Wound breakdown
- Developing a hernia in the wound

### Consequences of this procedure

- Pain
- Unsightly scarring of the skin

## How soon will my baby recover?

You will usually be able to take your baby home after 2 to 4 days.

Your baby should gradually return to normal feeding. If your baby continues to vomit, has a high temperature or shows any signs of dehydration such as not wetting nappies as often as usual and having a sunken fontanel (soft area at the top of their head), let your surgeon or GP know straight away.

Most babies make a good recovery and develop normally. However, pyloric stenosis can come back.

## Summary

Pyloric stenosis causes your baby to vomit soon after a feed which prevents them from getting goodness from their food. If left untreated the condition can cause dehydration and loss of salts. This can be life-threatening and needs to be treated promptly.



A thickened pyloric muscle

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

## Acknowledgements

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