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Cystoscopy & Diathermy (TURBT)

Trans-Urethral Resection of Bladder Tumour

What is this procedure and what are its benefits?

Cystoscopy is a visual examination of the bladder and urethra performed by a Urologist. A very small telescope (approx 3mm in diameter) is used. When blood is present in the urine, or recurrent infections or irritative conditions of the bladder or urethra are present, it is useful to perform cystoscopy to determine a cause or exclude serious conditions of the bladder.

The procedure itself takes approximately 15 minutes. Please follow the preparation instructions for the anaesthetist and your appointment letter.

Diathermy

If during cystoscopy an area within the bladder is found to be suspicious for serious pathology, a small biopsy is taken (a piece of tissue is taken and looked at under a microscope) and then this area is "diathermied". A small electrical current is used to remove or superficially destroy the abnormal tissue. This could be cysts, polyps or tumours. A biopsy may also be taken to determine the type of inflammation which may be present. The biopsy sites are diathermied to stop the bleeding.

What can I expect afterwards?

A slight amount of blood may be passed after the procedure, particularly if a biopsy was taken. All symptoms are short-lived.

Immediately after the procedure, bladder discomfort can be quite intense and painkillers will be organised for you to take home. Within a short time (a few days) any bleeding or discomfort typically settles.

If unexpected ill effects occur (these are rare <1%) after the procedure, please contact Prof O'Connell's rooms or the emergency department.