

## **Tension-Free Vaginal Tape (TVT) or Trans Obturator Technique (TOT) for the Treatment of Female Stress Urinary Incontinence**

### **About the Procedure**

A mesh tape is threaded around the urethra, like a sling, to add support to the sphincter area. This procedure has an 84% success rate.

### **Getting Ready for Surgery**

About one week before surgery you will have a pre-op check-up with the Women's Clinic. This includes lab work, a chest x-ray, and possibly an EKG (electrocardiogram). These tests tell us about your general health. Your doctor will talk to you about your surgery. S/he also will tell you about possible complications. This is a good time for you to ask any questions you have. You may want to write them down ahead of time, to help you remember. You also will sign a consent form for surgery. This form gives the doctor your permission to operate. You may go home the day of surgery, so **arrange for someone to drive you home**. You will not be able to drive yourself home. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the day of surgery. If you were told to take any medications the morning of your surgery, you may take them with a sip of water.

### **The Day of Surgery**

Check-in at Outpatient Surgery on the second floor. Someone from the Anesthesia Service will meet with you before surgery. S/he will start an IV (a small plastic tube placed directly into a vein) and give you some medication to relax you.

### **During Surgery**

A local, spinal, or epidural anesthetic is used for this surgery. It is given in the surgery suite. You will have two small incisions on your abdomen, in which the mesh tape is placed, and a small incision in the vagina. This procedure takes 30 to 60 minutes.

### **After Surgery**

You will return to Outpatient Surgery after the procedure. You may go home when you are awake, have had something to drink or eat, and have voided a sufficient amount of urine. Avoid excessive straining to urinate. The tape is more effective if you relax and let the bladder empty.

You must have someone drive you home. You cannot drive yourself. Before you leave, you will be given an appointment for a post-op clinic visit seven to ten days after surgery.

### **At Home**

You may develop some bruising in the lower pelvic region. This is normal. Take it easy at home for 7-10 days. The doctor will let you know when you can return to work. Keep your incisions clean and dry. You can take a shower but do not take a tub bath until the doctor sees you at your post-op visit. If you shower, keep the incisions dry by covering them with plastic wrap. Use a hair dryer to dry the incision sites. The abdominal stitches will be removed during your post-op clinic appointment. The vaginal stitches will dissolve. Make sure you keep your follow-up appointment.

### **Possible Complications**

Any surgical procedure can cause an infection. Watch for these signs or symptoms of infection:

- Fever greater than 101°
- Chills
- Drainage from the incisions
- Pain or burning with urination
- Inability to urinate

If you have any of the signs listed above, call the Women's Clinic at (612) 725-2030, Monday-Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. At any other time call Urgent Care at (612) 467-2771.

If you cannot urinate after surgery, you may have to have an indwelling catheter for seven to ten days or you may have to catheterize yourself six or more times a day.

There is a small chance that your body will reject the mesh tape. If that happens, the mesh tape will have to be removed.

Content approval: Women Veterans Comprehensive Health Center

September 1999

Revised November 2003, May 2005

VA Medical Center  
Minneapolis, Minnesota