



HALTON UROLOGY

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What is a Transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP)?

Transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP) is a surgery used to treat urinary problems due to an enlarged prostate.

A combined visual and surgical instrument (resectoscope) is inserted through the tip of your penis and into the tube that carries urine from your bladder (urethra). The prostate surrounds the urethra. Using the resectoscope, excess prostate tissue that is blocking urine flow is removed.

There are two main types of anesthetic used for this surgery:

- **general anesthetic:** You will be asleep throughout the operation.
- **regional anesthetic e.g. spinal:** A needle is placed into your back and a solution is injected that will numb your body from the waist down. You will be awake but maybe sleepy and you will not feel the operation.

TURP is generally considered an option for men with moderate to severe urinary problems that haven't responded to medication. Traditionally, TURP has been considered the most effective treatment for an enlarged prostate.

Risks of TURP can include:

- **Temporary difficulty urinating.** You might have trouble urinating for a few days after the procedure. Until you can urinate on your own, you will need to have a tube (catheter) inserted into your penis to carry urine out of your bladder.
- **Urinary tract infection.** This type of infection is a possible complication after any prostate procedure. An infection is increasingly likely to occur the longer you have a catheter in place. Some men who have TURP have recurring urinary tract infections.
- **Dry orgasm.** A common and long-term effect of any type of prostate surgery is the release of semen during ejaculation into the bladder rather than out of the penis. Also known as retrograde ejaculation, dry orgasm isn't harmful and generally doesn't affect sexual pleasure. But it can interfere with your ability to father a child.
- **Erectile dysfunction.** The risk is very small, but erectile dysfunction can occur after prostate treatments.
- **Heavy bleeding.** Very rarely, men lose enough blood during TURP to require a blood transfusion. Men with larger prostates appear to be at higher risk of significant blood loss.
- **Difficulty holding urine.** Rarely, loss of bladder control (incontinence) is a long-term complication of TURP.
- **Low sodium in the blood.** Rarely, the body absorbs too much of the fluid used to wash the surgery area during TURP. This condition — known as TURP syndrome or

transurethral resection (TUR) syndrome can be life-threatening if untreated. A technique called bipolar TURP eliminates the risk of TURP syndrome.

- **Need for retreatment.** Some men require follow-up treatment after TURP because symptoms return over time or never adequately improve. Sometimes, retreatment is needed because TURP causes narrowing (stricture) of the urethra or the bladder neck.