

Artificial Urinary Sphincter

What Is An Artificial Urinary Sphincter?

An artificial urinary sphincter (AUS) is a surgically implanted device designed to treat urinary incontinence, where the natural urinary sphincter is dysfunctional or weakened. The AUS is primarily used to treat men with sphincter dysfunction following prostate surgery, and women with intrinsic sphincter deficiency. The device mimics the function of a healthy sphincter, controlling the flow of urine from the bladder.

How Does An Aus Work?

Your AUS will consist of three main components:

- **A cuff** that wraps around your urethra and gently squeezes to prevent urine leakage.
- **A pressure-regulating balloon** that maintains the correct pressure around the cuff.
- **A control pump** located in your scrotum or labia, which you can operate manually to urinate.

To urinate, you activate the pump, which transfers fluid from the cuff to the balloon, allowing the urethra to open. The system then automatically resets, refilling the cuff to continue controlling urine flow.

Is An Aus Right For You?

You may benefit from an AUS if other incontinence treatments such as pelvic floor exercises or sling procedures have been ineffective. An AUS is particularly suited for addressing stress urinary incontinence following prostate surgery.

Preparing For Your Surgery

Before your operation, you'll undergo a thorough evaluation, including urodynamic tests to confirm that an AUS is a suitable option for you. You'll also need to:

- Complete blood tests and a physical examination.
- Discuss your current medications; some may need adjustment or temporary discontinuation.

Surgery

The surgery to implant an AUS is performed under general anaesthesia, typically requiring an overnight hospital stay. The procedure usually lasts about an hour.

After Surgery

You will be provided with instructions on how to operate your AUS device, including how to inflate and deflate the cuff to control urinary flow. You will be advised to:

- Limit physical activity, especially heavy lifting, for 4-6 weeks to ensure proper healing.
- Expect to resume normal activities, including sexual activity, about six weeks after surgery.
- Attend follow-up appointments to check the device's function and to address any potential complications.

This treatment can significantly improve your quality of life by reducing or eliminating urinary incontinence episodes, allowing you to regain control over bladder function.

Potential Risks And Complications

While the procedure is generally safe, potential risks include:

- Infection
- Erosion of the urethral tissue
- Mechanical failure of the device

Long-Term Outlook

An AUS can greatly improve your quality of life, with many patients achieving high levels of continence and satisfaction. However, the device may require adjustments or replacements over time.

Why Choose Birmingham Urology Centre?

At Birmingham Urology Centre, our skilled urologists are experienced in the latest treatments for urinary incontinence, including AUS implantation. We offer personalised care tailored to your specific needs, ensuring you receive the best possible outcomes.

Get In Touch

If you suffer from urinary incontinence and think an artificial urinary sphincter might be suitable for you, contact Birmingham Urology Centre today to arrange a consultation. Our dedicated team is here to support you through each step of your journey towards improved urinary control and a better quality of life.