🏥 What is a Hysterectomy?

A **hysterectomy** is a surgical procedure to **remove the uterus (womb)**. Depending on the reason for surgery, it may be performed using different approaches: ✅ **Vaginal hysterectomy** – Performed through the vagina, often used for prolapse or smaller uteri. ✅ **Abdominal hysterectomy** – An incision is made in the belly, usually required for larger uteri or complex cases. ✅ **Laparoscopic (keyhole) hysterectomy** – A minimally invasive procedure using small incisions and a camera.

🔹 **The best approach for your surgery will depend on your medical history, examination findings, and the reason for the hysterectomy.**

⚠️ What Are the Risks?

As with any surgery, hysterectomy carries some risks. These include:

Common Risks

✅ **Bleeding** – May require a blood transfusion in rare cases. ✅ **Infection** – Treated with antibiotics if needed. ✅ **Poor wound healing** – More common in smokers or those with diabetes. ✅ **Light vaginal bleeding** – Can last for several weeks post-surgery.

Less Common but Serious Risks

- **Injury to surrounding organs** – **Bladder, bowel, or ureter** may be affected, sometimes requiring further surgery.
- **Bowel obstruction** – Scar tissue can cause blockage, needing treatment.
- **Fistula formation** – An abnormal connection between the **bladder, ureter, bowel, or vagina**, which may require additional surgery.
- **Incomplete removal of the cervix** (in abdominal hysterectomy).
- **Sexual dysfunction** – Some women may experience changes in sensation.

General Risks of Surgery

- **Lung infection or collapse**
- **Heart attack or stroke**
- **Blood clots in the legs (DVT) or lungs (PE)**

🔄 Recovery After Hysterectomy

Recovery time varies based on the type of surgery and any complications. ✅ Most women stay in hospital for **1-3 days**, but this may be longer if needed. ✅ You will be discharged when you can **move independently, pass urine, and open your bowels**. ✅ **Light vaginal**

bleeding may continue for **several weeks**. ✅ Prescription **painkillers** will be provided for discomfort.

Activity Restrictions (4-6 Weeks)

❌ **No driving** until cleared by your doctor. ❌ **Avoid heavy lifting** to prevent strain. ❌ **No sexual intercourse** until fully healed.

❗ When to Seek Medical Attention

🚨 **Contact your GP or hospital if you experience:**

- Worsening pain not relieved by medication
- Heavy bleeding or **foul-smelling vaginal discharge**
- Fever, chills, or flu-like symptoms
- Difficulty passing urine or opening bowels

📚 Further Information & Support

For more details, visit: 📌 **Queensland Health – Women's Health**: www.health.qld.gov.au 📌 **RANZCOG (Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists)**: www.ranzcog.edu.au 📌 **Northern Health – Gynaecology Services**: www.nh.org.au 📌 **Your GP or healthcare provider**

🔷 **A hysterectomy is a major surgery, but with the right care, most women recover well. If you have any concerns, speak with your doctor.** 💙