



The ORION Trial Results

Why was the trial done?

Haemorrhoids affect up to 1 in 3 people. They can cause discomfort and bleeding, often leading to surgery. In England alone over 20,000 operations are carried out every year.

The ORION trial was designed to see if a newer treatment called **Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA)** works well enough to be an option for the standard operations currently offered by the NHS.

What did we do?

383 adults with second- or third-degree haemorrhoids (those that are enlarged or protrude) took part in the trial. To ensure the study was fair, patients were randomly assigned to one of two groups and were not told which treatment they received:

- **Group A:** Received the new **RFA treatment**.
- **Group B:** Received **Standard Care** (the surgeon decided from three procedures that are currently offered: haemorrhoidectomy, haemorrhoid artery ligation or stapled haemorrhoidopexy).

What were the results?

We looked at two main outcomes: pain one week after surgery and whether the haemorrhoids came back (recurrence) after one year.

- **Pain:** There was no significant difference in pain 7 days after surgery between RFA and standard care.

- **Recurrence:** At 12 months, symptoms returned for 47% of people who had RFA, compared to 39% of those who had standard care surgery. While RFA had a higher recurrence rate, the difference was not large enough to definitively say it was worse than standard care. At the same time, this study also cannot rule out an important increase in the number of uncured haemorrhoids.
- **Recovery:** People who had RFA took more time off work (about 2.6 days more on average) than those who had standard care surgery.
- **Cost to NHS:** RFA was found to be cheaper for the healthcare system because the procedure is faster and uses less expensive equipment.

Summary

Overall, the trial found that RFA is a safe option and costs the health system less. However, it did not lead to less pain 7 days after surgery and patients may experience a slightly higher chance of their haemorrhoids returning within a year.

How can I find out more?

If you would like to find out more, please visit the ORION website:

www.oriontrial.co.uk

We will keep this website update to date with publications and other information about the trial.

Thank you for taking part in the ORION Trial!