

What happens after colposcopy?

There is usually very little discomfort after the procedure. A brown-coloured paste called the Monsell's solution may be placed on your cervix. It acts like a liquid plaster to help stop any bleeding.

You can also expect some spotting or brownish discharge for a few days. It is usually advisable to avoid sexual intercourse or the use of tampons for 2 weeks to allow for the healing process. Sometimes, you may also feel mild abdominal pain that feels like period cramps, after treatment. These cramps usually go away after taking some mild painkillers like Paracetamol.

Your subsequent period may be a little heavier than usual but this is normal. However, if the bleeding is very heavy, please contact your doctor or the clinic. You can go to the Accident & Emergency Department after office hours.

Will I need further check-ups after treatment?

Follow-up appointments are necessary after treatment to ensure that all abnormal areas have been treated and the cervix has healed well.

Your doctor will advise you on the result of your treatment and plan for follow-up to ensure that the abnormal cells do not come back.

@The information provided is not exhaustive. Further discussion with your physician is strongly recommended.

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NUH Women's Centre
Is My Answer

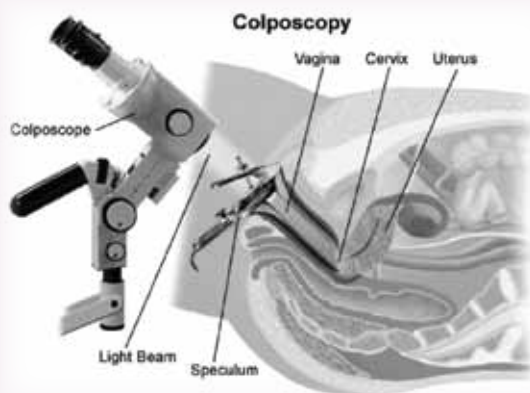
Abnormal Pap Smear & Colposcopy

Your Pap smear result is abnormal and you have been referred for colposcopy. What does this mean?

While you may have an abnormal Pap smear result, it does not mean that you have cancer. A pap smear is a test to screen for cells on the cervix that have the potential to become cancerous in future. These are called pre-cancerous cells. Pap smear is able to pick up cancerous or non-cancerous related changes. Early detection of these changes is important because they can be completely treated.

The most common way to identify pre-cancerous changes on your cervix is by doing colposcopy.

What is colposcopy?



A colposcopy is a simple examination to allow the specialists to see the abnormal cells on your cervix. It is done using a colposcope which functions like a magnifying glass. It helps the doctor to examine the changes on your cervix and identify the most suitable treatment for you.

Is there anything I should do before I come for my colposcopy appointment?

Doing a colposcopy can be very stressful for some women. You can bring your partner or a friend for support if you wish. It is recommended to do colposcopy when you are not menstruating. The entire procedure usually takes 15 minutes. However, please allow at least one hour for the consultation session with the doctor before the procedure.

What happens during colposcopy?

You will be seen by the specialists who will ask you some relevant questions. After the consultation, a nurse will bring you to the changing room where you will sit on a special couch. When you are comfortably positioned on the couch, a speculum is gently inserted into your vagina (similar to a Pap smear examination) so that the vaginal walls are held apart to allow the specialists to see your cervix clearly. In order to identify abnormal cells on the cervix, the doctor will gently dab different liquids on your cervix which will highlight the abnormal cells.

If an abnormal area is identified, the doctor may take a small sample of tissue. This is called a cervical punch biopsy. This biopsy is the size of a pinhead. You may feel a slight stinging sensation when the biopsy is taken but it will not be painful. The biopsy will be sent for analysis in the laboratory to check for any abnormal cells that will require treatment. You will be given an appointment in 2-3 weeks' time to return to the clinic to discuss the result.

What treatments are available?

There are several ways to treat pre-cancerous cells on the cervix. Not every woman will require the same treatment. The doctor will identify the most suitable treatment and discuss this with you. All these treatments are well tolerated by women. They can be done either in the colposcopy clinic while you are awake or under general anaesthetic in theatre.

LEEP (Loop Excision Electrical Procedure)



LEEP is performed using a fine wire loop. An electrical current is passed through the wire loop and this is then used to cut away the abnormal area on the cervix.

Laser vaporisation

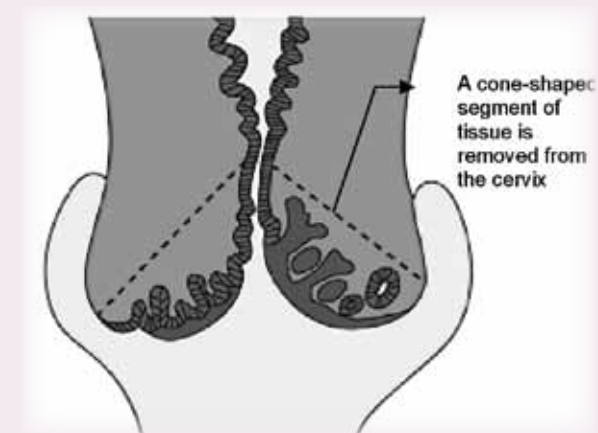


This procedure involves using a laser beam to destroy the area where the abnormal cells are on the cervix.

Cone Biopsy



A cone biopsy is a minor operation where a small piece of the cervix, in a shape of a small cone containing the abnormal cells, is removed from the cervix using either a laser, a surgical knife or by electrocautery.



Cold coagulation



Cold coagulation is a simple procedure which is usually performed in colposcopy clinic. The area with the abnormal cells on your cervix is heated away using a hot coagulation probe. The procedure takes about 45 to 60 seconds.

What if I am pregnant?

Colposcopy procedure is safe in pregnancy. However, treatment is usually carried out after you have delivered your baby.

Colposcopy will not induce early labour and also does not affect your fertility.