

Women's, children's and clinical support
Gynaecology and reproductive medicine

Colposcopy treatment under general anaesthesia

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

Your last colposcopy appointment shows that your cervix, at the neck of the womb, has an area of abnormal cells which require treatment.

The treatment involves removing a small disc-shaped piece of tissue containing these abnormal cells. This procedure will be carried out in the day care unit under a general anaesthesia. This means you will be asleep during the procedure.

What are the benefits of treatment?

This procedure will successfully remove the abnormal cells without the need for further treatment.

Are there any alternatives to this treatment?

Other treatment options include laser ablation and cryotherapy. However, these treatments are not available at our hospitals.

How do I prepare for my procedure?

If your operation is in the morning, please do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your admission. If your surgery is scheduled for the afternoon, you can have a light breakfast before 07.30 but please do not eat or drink afterwards. You should arrive on the ward on the day of your treatment at the time stated on your admissions letter.

Please note: please contact the colposcopy office or nurse specialist to discuss rescheduling your treatment if you are planning to go on holiday or abroad in the near future.

If you are due to be on your period on the day of your appointment, you may need to reschedule. Please contact the colposcopy office or nurse specialist for further advice.

What are the risks involved in having this procedure?

There is a small risk of heavy bleeding and infection following the treatment. Women who have had a large area of cervix treated or those who have had more than one treatment may need to have closer monitoring during pregnancy.

What are the risks of having surgery under general anaesthesia?

Any operation may lead to problems including the following general risks:

- excessive bleeding
- injury to nearby areas (tissue or organs)
- surgical or wound infection
- blood clots in the legs and lungs
- allergic reaction to drugs or anaesthetic
- breathing difficulties during or following the general anaesthetic

The likelihood of complications increases in patients who are overweight or obese, heavy smokers and those with medical problems such as diabetes or chronic lung conditions that are not well controlled.

After the operation

If you are feeling comfortable, and you have managed to eat and drink and there are no complications, you will be able to go home later on in the same day. But, you must be collected and have someone to stay with you overnight.

What should I expect after treatment?

You will be given an information sheet about what to expect after your treatment before you leave the hospital. Please read it carefully. It is important for you to remember:

- you may have some bleeding and/or discharge that will last for two to four weeks
- you may experience period-like pains for approximately 24 hours. Simple painkillers which can be bought over the counter should help
- we advise you not to have sexual intercourse for four weeks following the treatment to allow the cervix time to heal
- avoid intense sports and activities such as jogging, aerobics or swimming for two weeks

Follow-up appointments

You will receive an appointment for a smear test and HPV screen six months after the treatment. It is important that this is performed in the colposcopy department where you were treated. About 3 – 5 per cent of women will require a second treatment therefore it is important to attend your follow-up appointment.

Our contact details

Colposcopy department, Winston Churchill Wing, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street,
London W2 1NY

Direct line: 020 3312 1289

Appointment line: 020 3312 3326

Nurse specialists: 020 3312 1365

Email: colposcopyadvice.imperial@nhs.net

Further information

The British Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology: www.bsccp.org.uk

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:

imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk