

Biopsy of the cervix – Gynaecology Outpatient Department

Information for women

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

You have been referred for a colposcopy appointment because your cervical sample (smear test) has identified that you have some abnormal cells on the cervix. These abnormalities are called CIN (Cervical Intra-epithelial Neoplasia). Having these cells treated will help stop them developing into cancer.

When you come to the colposcopy clinic the doctor or nurse colposcopist in the clinic will examine the cervix (neck of the womb). If your cervix shows the changes associated with abnormal cells then you will be offered to have a biopsy (Small sample of tissue) taken from your cervix (neck of your womb) which will be sent to a laboratory for further examination. It is highly unlikely that you have cancer.

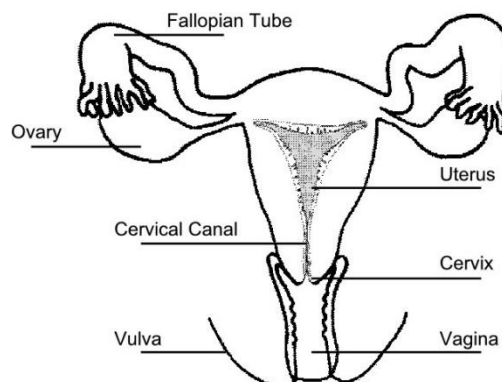


Diagram to show area from where your biopsy has been taken.

What will happen when I come for my biopsy?

To prepare for the treatment you may find it useful to take painkillers, such as, Ibuprofen or Paracetamol tablets about 1 hour before your appointment.

You are welcome to have a relative or friend stay with you if you wish.

Before the colposcopy examination you will be asked to undress from the waist downwards in a private room. You will be provided with a hospital gown but you may wish to wear a loose skirt or dress so that you do not have to remove all your lower clothing.

The nurse will help you to position yourself on the examination couch and will ensure that you are comfortable throughout the procedure. The colposcopist will put a speculum inside the vagina (just like when you had the smear) and will put some fluids on your cervix to help identify the abnormal cells.

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If the colposcopist feels that a biopsy should be taken, he or she will explain that to you before performing the procedure. You will not require local anaesthetic for this minor procedure.

There will be a screen where you can watch the examination and procedure if you wish. In some occasions the colposcopist might ask your permission to take some pictures for medical records and teaching purposes. You may decline if do not wish so.

How will I feel when I go home?

You may have some discomfort after having a biopsy taken. Taking painkillers, for example, paracetamol or ibuprofen can ease this. Always follow the instructions provided in the leaflet supplied with your tablets.

You may also have some bleeding and discharge from your vagina for up to 7 days after your procedure. If you still have periods your next period should arrive as normal.

If:

- you have any heavy bleeding
- you have any discharge with an unpleasant smell from your vagina
- you feel feverish, unwell or develop a temperature higher than 38°C or higher (100.4°F)
- your pain increases

you should contact your GP or the Outpatient Department where you had your procedure for further advice.

If you have an **urgent** problem you can contact your local Accident and Emergency Department for advice. (See contact numbers at the end of this leaflet).

What can I do to help myself?

In order to help the cervix heal you should avoid sexual intercourse, use of tampons or swimming until the bleeding and discharge has stopped. This might take up to 1 week.

When can I return to my normal activities and work?

You can usually return to all your normal activities and work straight away or as soon as you feel well enough. You should discuss this with your nurse or doctor.

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Will I need to return to hospital?

Your nurse will tell you if you need to be seen again in the Outpatient Department. They will either ask you to make another appointment before you go home or arrange for an appointment to be sent to you through the post.

If you have any worries please contact the Outpatient Department.

When will I be told the results of my biopsy?

Your biopsy will be sent to a laboratory. It can take up to 4 weeks to get the results of these tests. Your nurse will tell you how you will receive your results. This will be either in a letter sent to you through the post or discussed with you during your next outpatient appointment. Your GP will also be sent a letter explaining the results of your biopsy.

Contact numbers

If you need further advice please telephone:

University Hospital of North Tees

Outpatient Department

telephone: 01642 624172

Monday – Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm

Accident and Emergency Department

telephone: 01642 382899

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

University Hospital of Hartlepool

Outpatient Department

telephone: 01429 522868

Monday – Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

If you have any worries or concerns you should contact your GP during normal surgery hours. Outside surgery hours, you should contact your GP's surgery for the Out of Hours Service number.

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Further information is available from:

NHS Choices

Telephone: 111 (when it is less urgent than 999)

Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones

Or via the website at www.nhs.uk

Notes

Please use this space to make a note of any questions you may wish to ask.

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This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we're doing well or if there's anything which we can improve, that's why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719
Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084
Mobile: (can use text): 0779 506 1883
Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

telephone: 01642 833551 or email: information.governance@nth.nhs.uk

University Hospital of North Tees, Hardwick, Stockton-on-Tees. TS19 8PE
University Hospital of Hartlepool, Holdforth Road, Hartlepool. TS24 9AH

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Fax: 01642 624089