United Lincolnshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Colposcopy Aftercare Information

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Your colposcopy procedure – Loop excision of the cervix (LLETZ)

The treatment that you have had today is called loop excision of the cervix (LLETZ). During the procedure we used an electric wire to remove abnormal tissue from your cervix.

What are the benefits of having this procedure?

This procedure removes the abnormal cells from your cervix, which helps to reduce the risk of cervical cancer developing in the future.

What should I normally expect after the procedure?

You may feel discomfort, a bit like period pain, for a few hours after the procedure. You should take your normal painkillers to ease this pain, but do not take more than the recommended dose.

Occasionally, the colposcopist will use a chemical to stop any bleeding, this can result in a grey watery discharge. We would advise that you wear a panty liner as this can sometimes stain your underwear.

Usually, you will have a brown or red discharge from your vagina for 2 to 4 weeks after you have the procedure. Do not worry if you do not have any discharge or if the discharge continues slightly longer than 4 weeks, as everyone's cervix heals differently.

- Avoid tampon use for 4 weeks following treatment. Instead, use pads or panty liners.
- Avoid vaginal intercourse for 4 weeks following treatment.
- Avoid swimming for 2 weeks following treatment.
- You may drive following treatment unless otherwise advised by the colposcopist.
- Your periods may be different straight after the treatment but should soon settle into their usual pattern.

Are there any risks to this procedure?

Complications are very rare, but you may get an infection in the area we took the piece of tissue from. If this happens, you may need to take antibiotics.

Symptoms of an infection:

- High temperature or strong-smelling discharge.
- Pain. You should take your normal painkillers to ease this pain, but do not take more than the recommended dose.
- A large amount of bleeding (heavier than your usual period). We usually stop any bleeding during the procedure. If the bleeding is heavy, we may need to use a stitch and a vaginal pack (a bandage placed in the vagina). If we need to give you a stitch, you may have to have a general anaesthetic. If this happens, you may need to stay in hospital overnight to make sure the bleeding settles.

If you develop an infection, this could happen immediately after treatment or any time within the next 14 days. If you have any of the above symptoms, it is very important that you contact your family doctor or the colposcopy clinic for advice, as you may need another examination or antibiotics.

Other rare complications

There is no clear evidence that a treatment measuring less than 10mm in depth is associated with any risk of labour occurring prematurely for future pregnancies or the risk of rupture of membranes surrounding a future pregnancy. However, treatment is tailored to the individual and may require treatment that is more than 10mm depth.

The treatment is not associated with any increased risk of infertility but may increase the risk of miscarriage between 13 to 28 weeks of pregnancy.

Stenosis – this is where the opening at the neck of the womb becomes narrow.

Returning to normal activities

You should be able to return to normal activities including light exercise after the procedure.

We recommend that you do not have sex for 4 weeks, to allow the area to heal.

We recommend that you avoid swimming for 2 weeks.

You may drink alcohol in moderation after treatment.

Although there are no known health grounds for avoiding travel following treatment, overseas medical attention for complications arising from treatment may not be covered by insurance.

We will be writing to your GP to tell them that you have had this procedure.

What will the loop excision biopsy show?

The technical term used to refer to cell changes confirmed by a biopsy or treatment is Cervical Intra-epithelial Neoplasia, more commonly known as CIN.

To make distinctions between the various states of changes in the cells, doctors have developed an increasing scale from 1 to 3 according to how much of the cells are affected. So, treatment results will most commonly be CIN 1, CIN 2 or CIN 3. The results of this loop excision biopsy will show what follow-up you will require. We will send you a letter with your results. If you have not received this letter 8 weeks after your appointment, please contact the Colposcopy Secretaries.

Email: ulth.colposcopy@nhs.net

Lincoln	01522 707119
Pilgrim	01205 445415

After Diathermy to the cervix

You can continue with normal day to day activities straight after treatment. You will probably have a discharge for a week or two afterwards. You should not have any bleeding. It is advisable to avoid sexual intercourse for 2 weeks. Tampons should be avoided until after your next period.

In the unlikely event that you feel ill, experience lower abdominal pain or notice an offensive vaginal discharge you should consult your own doctor.

Following treatment, we will discharge you back to your own GP.

After punch biopsies of the cervix

It is likely that you will have a blood stained discharge for a few days after the biopsy. It is advisable to avoid sexual intercourse and using tampons for 4 days.

The reason that the biopsy was taken was to help the colposcopist make a diagnosis. In many cases the results show minor abnormalities which will return to normal without treatment. In this case you will be discharged to your GP for cervical screening tests (smears).

Depending on the result of the biopsy you may need to have some treatment. The colposcopist will write to you and your GP when the results are available and let you know if any treatment or further appointments are required. An appointment is usually sent with your results letter.

Contact details

If you have very heavy bleeding other than your period, you can contact the gynaecology unit for advice 24 hours a day.

Lincoln	Branston Ward 01522 573132
Boston	Ward - 1B Women's Health 01205 445432

If you have any more questions about your appointment, treatment or results please contact the colposcopy secretaries on:

Lincoln **01522 707119**
Boston **01205 445415**

Or email
ulth.colposcopy@nhs.net

A nurse will contact you to answer any queries if required.

Please be aware that results cannot be given over the telephone:

Please Note: Clinics at Lincoln and Pilgrim Hospitals are located in the Maternity Wing.

References

NHS England Cervical Screening: programme and colposcopy management
Published 3 May 2010
Last updated 24th June 2025

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