

Leeds Colposcopy Clinics

Colposcopy clinic
Level 04 Gledhow wing
St James Hospital
Beckett St
Leeds
LS9 7TF
Tel 2066424

Colposcopy clinic
A floor Clarendon wing
The General Infirmary
Great George street
Leeds
LS1 3EX
Tel 3923628

Colposcopy clinic
Outpatients dept
Wharfedale General Hospital
Newall Carr road
Otley
LS21 2LY
Tel 3922093

Colposcopy clinic
The Leeds Centre For Sexual Health
Sunnybank Wing
Leeds General Infirmary
Leeds
LS1 3EX
Tel 3926725

Patients are referred to the colposcopy clinic following either:

- ◆ An abnormal cervical smear
- ◆ Suspicious symptoms e.g. bleeding after intercourse/contact bleeding
- ◆ Suspicious looking cervix noted by smear taker

The colposcopist who will either be, a nurse colposcopist or a doctor will examine you. Another nurse will be present as a chaperone. On the first appointment swabs will be taken to exclude the presence of infection. It may be necessary to repeat the smear in clinic and this cannot be done if you are on a period. It may be advisable to telephone first if you are likely to be menstruating on the day of your appointment.

A solution will be put on to the cervix to highlight any abnormal cells. If there is a definite area of abnormality present you may be able to have the treatment on your first visit. However it may be necessary first of all to take a small biopsy from the cervix to determine whether treatment is required. You will be given another appointment to be reviewed with the results of the biopsy and smear and depending on the results treatment may then occur.

Treatment is called loop diathermy and involves removing an area of pre-cancerous cells from the cervix to prevent cancer from developing. A local anaesthetic is infiltrated into the cervix to make the treatment pain free. The abnormal cells are then "scooped out" (resected) with a heated wire loop. The area will then be cauterised to stop any bleeding.

We have a small rest area with comfortable chairs where you will be given a cup of tea or coffee before going home. We will advise you on the expected after effects and give you instructions such as no sexual intercourse and not to use tampons for approximately 4 weeks; whilst the cervix heals.

Frequently asked questions

Q) Can I bring someone with me?

A) Yes you can. Patients often bring a partner, friend or relative. They can sit with you during the consultation and can even come into the examination room if you wish.

Q) How long will my appointment last?

A) Between 15 and 30 minutes. If treatment is necessary you will be kept a further 15 minutes whilst you have a rest and a drink.

Q) I'd prefer to be examined by a woman. Is that possible?

A) In most of the clinics there are female colposcopists, please ask on arrival if you would prefer to be seen by one.

Q) Do I need to bring anything with me?

A) A list of any medication you are taking would be useful

Q) Will any of the procedures hurt?

A) No we use local anaesthetic to make the treatment pain free. The local anaesthetic may sting initially but soon settles down.

Q) How soon after a loop diathermy treatment am I able to resume sexual activity?

A) We usually say about 4 weeks.

Q) How soon after a biopsy am I able to resume sexual activity?

A) We usually say about 4 days.

Q) I have a contraceptive coil in place. Does this make a difference?

A) Not for the initial examination or for any smears, swabs or biopsies. However if loop diathermy treatment is required we will need to remove your coil and arrange for it to be replaced later.

Q) Will I be bleeding after the examination?

A) No. If we take a biopsy we will use a chemical to stop the bleeding. The chemical is grey and you will need to use a sanitary towel that we will provide you with. If you have a treatment you will have some discharge and again we will provide you with a pad.

Q) What happens if I am pregnant?

A) We still need to examine you to exclude cancer being present. If we see a pre-cancer the treatment will be postponed until after your delivery; and we will monitor you during the pregnancy. However if we did see a cancer on the cervix we would discuss the situation with you and may need to perform the treatment even though you are pregnant.

Q) How often will I need to come to colposcopy clinic?

A) Usually until your smears have reverted back to normal. What usually happens is you have a check up and smear six-month after treatment and then we can discharge you.

Q) What will happen if I am on my period?

A) We would not be able to obtain a smear from you so it is probably better to reschedule your appointment; telephone before coming if you are unsure.

Q) My kids are off school can I bring them with me?

A) Yes if you wish too, if they will be all right unattended in the waiting area. If we have a spare nurse she will of course look after them whilst you are examined. Again, telephone first if you are unsure and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Q) I usually go to the gym three times a week will I be able to after treatment?

A) We do advise that you take it easy for a few days after treatment, therefore I would give the gym a miss for a few days.

Q) How soon after treatment will I be able to go swimming?

A) We usually advise you to avoid swimming until the cervix has healed, so avoid it for 4 weeks.

Q) My GP is referring me with inadequate smears not an abnormal one what does this mean?

A) That the smear taker either did not get enough cells for the laboratory to examine or that the type of cells they need to look at were not on the smear. This sometimes happens after the menopause, in which case a course of oestrogen cream applied inside the vagina can improve the cells ready for a new smear to be taken.

Q) Will my colposcopist be a qualified colposcopist?

A) Yes all our colposcopists have an accreditation in colposcopy and regularly update their practice. We also train colposcopists in the clinic and our trainees are supervised by an accredited colposcopist.

Q) What about students will there be any present?

A) If there are student nurses in clinic or medical students you will be made aware before you are seen and are able to decline their presence, we only allow one observer per patient due to the intimate nature of the examination.

Q) What happens if my smear is abnormal but there is no abnormality on my cervix?

A) We will look at your referral smear in our fortnightly cytology/pathology meeting and check it has been graded correctly before making a management plan; you will be kept informed of all decisions.

Q) What happens if I do not attend for my appointment?

A) Your GP will be informed by letter and we will send you one further appointment with a letter encouraging you to attend. You may have to wait a while to be seen as appointments are scarce. If you telephone to reschedule we are able to give your appointment to someone else.