

Cervical biopsy

Information for patients from Women's Health

This leaflet is not meant to replace the information discussed between you and your doctor, but can act as a starting point for such a discussion or as a useful reminder of the key points.

Why do I need a cervical biopsy?

Your cervical screening test has shown evidence of abnormal cells. It is important to remember that it is very unlikely that these changes are cancer. They can represent infection with the Human Papilloma virus (HPV) or can be pre-cancerous changes (CIN). Pre-cancerous changes left unmonitored or untreated over several years might become cancer in the future.

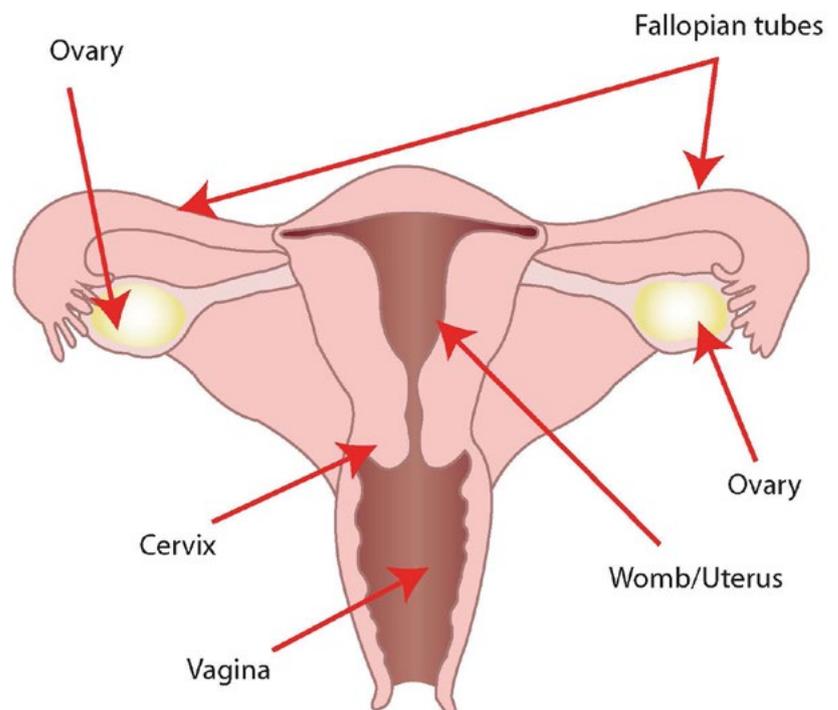
Colposcopic examination of your cervix has shown an area of your cervix that needs a closer look.

What is a cervical biopsy?

A cervical biopsy involves removing a small sample of tissue from the surface of your cervix. The biopsy is about the size of a pencil-tip.

This procedure is carried out during your appointment in the Colposcopy Unit, by a doctor or nurse colposcopist.

The biopsy is diagnostic and not meant to be a treatment.



Will the biopsy hurt?

Local anaesthetic is not usually needed for this procedure. You may feel a slight sting/pinch, which may be uncomfortable but it should not be painful.

How will I feel after my procedure?

You may have some period-type pain for a short time following your biopsy. Normal over the counter painkillers (such as paracetamol) should control mild to moderate pain or discomfort. If your pain is not controlled with these, please contact your GP.

You may have slight vaginal bleeding or a slight brownish discharge after your biopsy. This may last for two to five days.

Does someone need to come with me to my appointment?

This is not essential but you may wish to arrange this.

When will I get my results?

The cervical biopsy will be sent to the histology laboratory for examination. Your doctor will write to you (and your GP) with your results within six weeks of your appointment. It should be clear from this letter what follow-up you will need.

Will I need a follow-up appointment?

Depending on the result of your biopsy, you may be asked either to come to the clinic for treatment (within six to eight weeks), or follow-up (usually in six or 12 months), or you may be returned to the routine smear recall programme.

What should I avoid when I return home after my biopsy?

You are advised to avoid having sex or using tampons and vaginal medication/creams/lubricants for two to five days, or until any vaginal discharge has stopped. This will allow your cervix to heal and avoid the risk of infection.

You may bath, shower, or return to work the same day, although in order to help avoid infection you are advised not to swim for a day or two, or until any vaginal discharge has stopped.

What if I feel unwell when I get home or have further questions?

If you feel unwell at home or have any questions, please contact one of the following.

- Colposcopy Suite, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital**, Margate
Telephone: 01843 23 45 85 (Monday to Thursday 8am to 5pm)
Outside of these times an answer machine is available for you to leave a message.
- Colposcopy Unit, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**, Canterbury
Telephone: 01227 78 31 07 (Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm)

For urgent enquiries, please ring Birchington Ward on telephone 01843 23 42 01 or the Women's Health Suite on 01233 65 19 87, where a nurse will be able to advise you.

What if I have to cancel my appointment?

If for any reason you are not able to keep your clinic appointment or if you are having your period at the time of any further colposcopy appointments, please telephone the relevant colposcopy suite to book another appointment. Having your period does not always mean you cannot be seen; however we may have to reschedule your appointment.

Colposcopy Unit, Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Canterbury

- Colposcopy Co-ordinator - Telephone: 01227 78 31 07

Colposcopy Suite, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital, Margate

- Mr Nordin / Dr Ismail / Nurse Colposcopist - Telephone: 01843 23 43 34
- Mr Okorocho / Dr Woodward - Telephone: 01843 23 43 33
- Dr Iyer / Dr Kokka - Telephone: 01843 23 51 39

Colposcopy, William Harvey Hospital, Ashford

- Colposcopy Secretary (Mr Helmy, Mr Agboola) - Telephone: 01233 61 67 00

Colposcopy, Buckland Hospital, Dover

- Colposcopy Secretary (Mr Seaton) - Telephone: 01233 61 67 00

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation