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# *Endometrial Biopsy*

**Patient Information**

## What is an endometrial biopsy?

This is a simple procedure which involves obtaining a sample of cells from the lining of the womb. These cells can be examined under a microscope to detect if there are any abnormalities which would require further treatment.

## Why do I need an endometrial biopsy?

You are being offered an endometrial biopsy because your ultrasound scan has shown the lining to be thicker than normal. This can occur for a number of reasons and most often requires no treatment at all. However, a small number of women will have some abnormal changes in the cells. Occasionally these changes can be pre-cancerous or cancerous and further treatment would be recommended. It is necessary to examine the cells of the lining of the womb to confirm whether or not there is an abnormality.

## What does an endometrial biopsy involve?

The procedure is similar to having a smear taken in that it involves a speculum being placed in the vagina. A very narrow tube like device called a pipelle is passed through the cervix into the womb. While the sample is being taken you may experience some period type cramping or discomfort. This does not usually last for more than a few minutes.

## What should I expect after the biopsy has been taken?

After the biopsy you might have a slight blood stained discharge. If this occurs it is normal and should not last for more than a few days. Occasionally you can feel a little light headed following the procedure and for this reason the nurse will ask you to wait ten minutes before leaving the department to go home. After the procedure you should feel well enough to carry out your usual routine.

## What will happen next?

If the results of your biopsy are normal we will not need to see you again in relation to this episode of bleeding. You will be referred back to your GP. A copy of the histology report and a letter stating that there is no abnormal pathology will be sent to your GP. You will also receive a copy of this letter.

Occasionally the endometrial biopsy fails because it is not technically possible to do or the sample of tissue obtained is too small to confirm the presence of normal or abnormal cells.

In this instance you will be offered the next available appointment to attend the One Stop Hysteroscopy Clinic. Here the doctor has the facilities to look inside your womb while repeating your biopsy. This procedure is known as a hysteroscopy with endometrial biopsy.

Should the biopsy taken either by the nurse or doctor show abnormal cells, you will be offered the next available appointment in the Outpatients Department to discuss treatment with a consultant or his team. This appointment will usually be within two weeks of you having the biopsy.

## Benefits of Endometrial Biopsy

It is a fast, reliable and convenient way of getting a sample of cells from the lining of the womb enabling an accurate diagnosis to be made. It can be carried out in the Outpatients Department without the need for a general anaesthetic and hospital admission.

## Alternative Tests

Outpatient hysteroscopy with endometrial biopsy.

**OR** hysteroscopy and endometrial biopsy under general anaesthetic.

## Risks associated with Endometrial Biopsy

Pain following the procedure, prolonged bleeding or vaginal discharge due to infection.

Further advice and information can be obtained from the doctor or nurse performing your procedure.