

Cancer Screening Programmes

Your colposcopy procedure – Cryotherapy of the cervix

The procedure you have had today is called cryotherapy. During the procedure we used nitrous oxide to freeze the affected area of your cervix.

What are the benefits of having this procedure?

This procedure destroys any abnormal cells in your cervix, which helps to reduce the risk of cervical cancer developing in the future. It also reduces the symptoms of a cervical ectopy, for example bleeding or discharge (if your most recent cervical screening test was negative). A cervical ectopy is where the cervical skin is thin and blood vessels are close to the surface. This sometimes causes bleeding or discharge. This is not cancer.

What should I 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.
- Usually, you will have discharge with a little blood in it (or a watery discharge) from your vagina for two to four weeks after you have the procedure. Do not worry if you do not have any discharge or if the discharge continues slightly longer than four weeks, as everyone's cervix heals differently.
- Do **not** use tampons for at least four weeks after the procedure, or until the discharge stops. Instead, use pads or panty liners.
- You can have a bath or shower as normal.
- 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 treated. 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.

If you develop an infection, this could happen immediately after the procedure or at 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.

Returning to normal activities

- You should be able to return to work and normal activities the day after you have your procedure. We recommend that you do not have sex or go swimming until the discharge stops, to allow the area to heal.

If you had your treatment because of an abnormal cervical screening result, you will need to have follow-up cervical screening tests to check if the treatment has been successful. It is very important that you have these tests.

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

If you have any questions about when your next cervical screening test is due, please ask a member of staff or phone the clinic and we will be pleased to help you.

More information

If you have any more questions about your treatment, phone our clinic on 0121 627 2698

Contact names: Debbie Wise (Clinical Nurse Specialist)
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Amanda Sutton (Clinical Nurse Specialist)

We have taken great care to make sure the information in this leaflet is accurate.

However, we do not take responsibility for any inaccurate or missing information in this leaflet. If you are worried about this information, please contact us.



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Reference Centre
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