

COLPOSCOPY

What is a Colposcopy?

Colposcopy is a relatively painless and easy office visit procedure used to look at the cervix with a magnified view using a special microscope called a Colposcope. Your provider may recommend this procedure if you have had an abnormal pap smear, a history of genital warts or if your cervix looks abnormal on a routine exam. Having a biopsy does NOT mean you have cancer, as there are many other conditions that cause abnormal pap smears.

The procedure can take about 15-30 minutes

Scheduling

Try and schedule your colposcopy after you have finished your menstrual period as bleeding can interfere with the exam. You may want to take 400-600mg of Ibuprofen 1 to 2 hours prior to your exam to help with any cramping that may occur. You may be asked to leave a urine specimen upon arrival at your appointment to test for pregnancy if your provider feels it is indicated

The Procedure

The procedure is done like a pap smear. The provider will look at your cervix through the Colposcope, which provides magnification. The pap smear may be repeated as well. A vinegar solution will be applied to your cervix with a cotton swab to help show any abnormal areas.

If any unusual areas are seen a small piece of tissue (2-3mm) will be removed with a special instrument. This is called a biopsy and will be sent to a pathologist to examine them under a microscope. The biopsies will feel like a small pinch or cramp, because the cervix does not have many nerve endings. Another small biopsy will be obtained by gently scraping the cervical opening and canal; this is called endocervical curettage.

After the Procedure

After the procedure you may have some spotting and/or cramping for 1-3 days. You will receive an instruction sheet about what to watch for before you leave the clinic.

Reports from the biopsies usually take about 1 week to be reported back to your provider, at which time you should receive a call. Please call the office if you have not heard from your provider in 10-14 days. When you talk with your provider they will advise you about any further treatment or any follow up that may be needed.

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