

Cervical Biopsy

Patient Information

Gynaecology Service



The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link: <https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets> or scan the QR code.

Author ID: WW-T
Leaflet Ref: Gyn 009
Version: 11
Leaflet title: Cervical Biopsy
Date Produced: March 2026
Expiry Date: March 2028

What is a cervical biopsy?

It is the removal of a small piece of tissue from the cervix (neck of the womb). It is performed, to diagnose if there are any abnormal changes to the cervix.

Risks

No major risks

Benefits

It allows confirmation of the findings, at the Colposcopy examination using a small sample of tissue from the cervix; that is looked at in the laboratory. This helps the doctor or specialist nurse to decide what is the most appropriate treatment for you.

Alternatives

No biopsy is taken. Your management then relies on the Colposcopy findings alone which are not always accurate enough to make a diagnosis. This may result in under or over treatment.

How is it performed?

The doctor or specialist nurse removes a small piece of tissue using biopsy forceps and then seals the area by touching it with a chemical called silver nitrate

You will be placed on a specially designed couch in a similar position as for a smear and/or Colposcopy, which makes the procedure more comfortable for you.

Is it painful?

The cervix is relatively insensitive to pain and taking a biopsy gives you a pinching sensation and is usually well tolerated without any local anaesthetic.

How long does it take?

On average, the whole procedure of colposcopy which includes detailed examination of the neck of your womb takes about 15 to 20 minutes. The actual taking of the biopsy takes about two to three minutes.

Follow-up

You will be followed up at the discretion of the individual doctor or specialist nurse, who will either make a new appointment for you on the day or send you an appointment through the post after reviewing the results.

Advice following treatment

- You may experience some vaginal bleeding, and this may last for up to two weeks on and off
- You should avoid intercourse for around 7 to 10 days, and you should use sanitary pads and avoid using tampons during this time. If you have bleeding which is heavier than a normal period, or an offensive discharge, contact the Hanover Women's Healthcare Unit or your GP for further advice. If you have problems out of hours, please contact Swinley Ward
- Avoid baths for 7 to 10 days, showers may be taken.
- Avoid strenuous exercise including swimming for 7 to 10 days.

Pregnancy and contraception

You should avoid pregnancy until you have had your first follow-up and have had a normal smear result. You should continue to use your normal contraception. If you are not using contraception, we would advise using a sheath (condom) until after you have completed your treatment.

Contact information

If you have any queries or worries of any kind, please phone the Unit and ask to speak to one of the nurses.

If you are on a period or cannot make your appointment for another reason, please ring to let us know and make another appointment.

Hanover Women's Healthcare Unit Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:30pm
Telephone 01942 264 959 or 01942 264 960

Or

Colposcopy Secretary. Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:30pm
Telephone: 01942 264 091

Or

Out of hours - Swinley Ward, Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan Lane, Wigan.
Telephone: 01942 822 568

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan
WN1 2NN

Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

© Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.
All rights reserved. Not to be reproduced in whole or in part without the permission of the copyright owner.

Call 111 first when it's less urgent than 999.



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

GOLD AWARD 2021

Proudly serving those who serve.

Phone: 0808 802 1212

Text: 81212

www.veteransgateway.org.uk

