

# LLETZ: Large Loop Excision of the Transformation Zone

## Patient Information

Obstetrics & Gynaecology Service



The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link:  
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## Contact numbers

- Women's Healthcare Unit, Leigh  
Telephone 01942 264959 / 01942 264960 Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 4:30 pm
- Colposcopy Secretary  
Telephone 01942 264091 Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 4:30 pm
- Swinley Ward, Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan  
Telephone 01942 822568 (out of hours)

## What is LLETZ?

LLETZ stands for Large Loop Excision of the Transformation Zone. This is a routine procedure performed to remove pre-cancerous or cancerous cells on your cervix (neck of the womb). This is offered when there is an abnormality found on your smear that has a chance of progression to cervical cancer if left untreated. A LLETZ may rarely be offered for other reasons, but these will be discussed at length with you by your colposcopy nurse or doctor in clinic.

Most commonly, you will be offered LLETZ for treatment of the following -

- A cervical smear result showing moderate or severe dyskaryosis (abnormal cells)
- A cervical smear result showing cervical glandular intraepithelial neoplasia (CGIN)
- A biopsy that shows precancerous changes known as CIN2, CIN3 or CGIN

## How is it performed?

It involves using a local anaesthetic injection to numb your cervix, so that the procedure can be performed pain free. You will not routinely be put to sleep. The doctor or specialist nurse removes the abnormal tissue using a heated wire loop. A small electro-surgery pad will be applied to your thigh as a safety precaution for the LLETZ equipment, and it is removed when the procedure has been completed.

The procedure is performed in a position similar to that used to obtain your smear test. However, there are leg rests for comfort. The specially designed couch makes the procedure easier.

LLETZ can be offered at your first visit. The procedure will be fully explained, and you will be asked to sign a consent form. Written consent is taken to ensure that you are fully informed of the reasoning for, benefits of and risks associated with the LLETZ procedure.

A pregnancy test will be performed if you are of childbearing age.

## Is it painful?

The cervix is relatively insensitive to pain. Prior to treatment, the cervix is frozen with an injection of local anaesthetic using a small needle; however, some discomfort, like a period pain, is sometimes felt during this procedure.

Occasionally, it may be more appropriate to have the procedure under a general anaesthetic, but if this is the case, your clinician will explain everything and arrangements for a future day case admission will be made.

## Will it cure me?

The majority of patients are cured by the first treatment. A few patients will require a second treatment, and even less will require an alternative treatment such as cone biopsy or hysterectomy.

## How long will it take?

On average about 15 - 20 minutes. You should plan to spend about an hour in the clinic to allow a period of 20 - 30 minutes rest afterwards.

## Benefits

- The abnormal area of the cervix (neck of the womb) will be removed.
- This allows us to send this abnormal tissue to the laboratory to be checked, and to confirm that the abnormal area has been completely removed.

## Risks

- Infection and bleeding.
- There is small risk of late miscarriage or premature delivery in subsequent pregnancies. However, this depends upon the length of LLETZ biopsy, the type of abnormal cells found and number of times LLETZ procedure has been done. It is also important to note that the presence of abnormal cells may also increase this risk if left untreated. There is no increased risk of fertility problems following LLETZ treatment.
- A small minority of women might need a repeat procedure because of incomplete removal of abnormal cells.

## Advice following treatment

It is normal to feel the effects of the adrenaline in the local anaesthetic for some time, and this should clear before attempting to drive.

Take it easy for the next two or three days, but resume normal activities. It is safe to consume alcohol in moderation after treatment if you wish. You will experience some vaginal bleeding and discharge, and this may last up to four to six weeks on and off.

If you have bleeding which is heavier than a period, or an offensive discharge, contact the Women's Healthcare Unit or your GP. If you have any problems out of hours, contact Swinley Ward for advice. The telephone numbers are on page 2.

**Do not** have intercourse and **do not** use tampons for 4 - 6 weeks. Your next period may be slightly heavier than normal.

- Avoid baths and swimming for 4 weeks; showers may be taken.
- Avoid strenuous exercise for 2 weeks. But other usual activities, including light exercise can continue.

You may wish to bring someone with you to the appointment and have them drive you. However, most patients will be fine to drive following the procedure. If you are due to travel within 4 weeks of the procedure, it is advisable that you inform your insurer as this may impact on the cover.

## Follow-up

Once we have the results, we will write to you informing you of the result, and we will advise you when your next smear will be. It is usually 6 months after the LLETZ treatment with your GP practice nurse. The cervical screening programme will inform your GP and send you a letter when this is due.

## Pregnancy and contraception

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

If you are on your period, or cannot attend for some other reason, please ring:  
Women's Healthcare Unit, **01942 264959** or **01942 264960** or the Colposcopy secretary on  
01942 264091 Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm

## Out of hours emergencies only:

Swinley Ward, Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan - telephone 01942 822568

If you have any queries or worries of any kind, contact the Women's Healthcare Unit Leigh Infirmary and ask to speak to a nurse.

## 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.

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