

Colposcopy with/without Cervical Biopsy

Definition:

Colposcopy is the visualization of the cervix with a colposcope which is an instrument that magnifies the cervix 13 – 40 times. This allows the physician to more easily identify abnormal areas. The colposcope resembles binoculars on a stand.

Indications for colposcopy:

- Abnormal Pap smear
- Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)
- Vaginal wall changes

Before the procedure:

You may experience some cramping as the procedure is being performed. You may take two Extra Strength Tylenol or two Ibuprofen 200 mg. approximately one hour before the procedure. These medications may also be used for any discomfort after the procedure.

Procedure:

Just as with a Pap test, you will lie on your back and place your feet in the stirrups. Your physician will insert a speculum into your vagina and the cervix will be visualized. The colposcope is outside the vaginal opening and never touches your body. The physician will cleanse the cervix with acetic acid (a dilute vinegar solution). If a biopsy of the cervix is done, you may experience a sensation of pressure, a mild to moderate cramping or a quick pinch. After the biopsies are taken, a chemical cautery solution is applied to the biopsy sites. This starts out as a mustard colored solution but when it mixes with blood, it turns dark brown or black and may be gritty.

Following the procedure, some women experience flushing and a pounding sensation in their heads. This usually can be avoided by continuing to lie down for a few minutes after the procedure is completed. If you feel faint after standing up, sit or lie down immediately.

Timing:

The procedure is scheduled between menstrual periods. Do not douche, use any vaginal cream, jelly, foam, suppositories, diaphragm or tampons for at least three days prior to your appointment. It is recommended that you not have intercourse for at least 24 hours prior to your appointment. If you have a vaginal infection, with abnormal discharge, the procedure may be delayed until the infection is cleared.

Results of the test:

The biopsy specimen is sent to a pathology lab to be evaluated. These results will determine what, if any, further treatment is necessary and how often you will need to have your Paps repeated. It is likely that your Pap smears will be done more frequently for the next year to assure that your Paps remain normal.

What to expect after the procedure:

- You may have discharge for several days. It may be red, rust colored, brown, black or yellow. It is not unusual to pass something that looks like tissue or skin.
- Avoid tampons for at least four weeks.
- Do not have intercourse for two weeks.
- Do not douche for at least two weeks.
- Wear plain (not deodorant) pads.
- You may shower or bathe as usual.

Call our office if:

- you have unusually heavy vaginal bleeding – soaking a pad per hour.
- you have a fever over 100 degrees.
- you have persistent pain that is not relieved with Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
- you have not received your results in seven days.

Insurance and Billing:

There will be a fee charged by our office and the pathology department who evaluate the tissue. Please check with your insurance company to see if any pre-certification of this procedure is necessary. Please document the phone number you call, the person with whom you speak and what information is given to you.