

Who do I contact if I have any questions?

You can telephone the Women's Health Suite on 0161 291 5446 if you have any questions or email our nurse colposcopist Jo Pennington on www.Jo.Pennington@uhsm.nhs.uk

Further information about smear results and colposcopy can be found at:- www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk
www.jostrust.co.uk

Colposcopy Clinic
Women's Health Suite
Ward F16
South Entrance 15
Orange zone

Wythenshawe Hospital
Southmoor Road
Manchester
M23 9LT
0161 291 5446

We hope you find this leaflet helpful. If you think we can improve our service in any way, please do let us know.

Out-Patient Colposcopy



Why have I been sent an appointment for this clinic?

You have been referred to this clinic because your cervical smear test has shown some abnormal cells on the neck of the womb (cervix). This is not unusual. About one in twelve smears are abnormal. The cervix is made up of many cells that divide and replace themselves in a controlled and set manner. Sometimes, these cells start to divide in a non-routine way. These cells are called abnormal cells and can be detected on a smear test. These abnormal cells need investigating as left undetected or untreated, they can develop into cancer.

What is a colposcopy?

A colposcopy is a procedure to examine your cervix using an instrument called a colposcope. It is a large magnifying lens on a stand with a light attached. With this the Colposcopist can examine more closely the changes on the cervix. The same instruments are used as when you have a smear taken. Different dyes are applied to the cervix with cotton wool. The way the cervix changes colour can indicate whether there is a problem or not. If there are any changes, the Colposcopist may take a small biopsy of the skin from the cervix and send it to the laboratory to be looked at more closely. This biopsy is not painful but may cause slight discomfort whilst it is being taken.

How long does it take?

The colposcopy will take no more than 20-30 minutes. There are usually 3 people in the room when you have your procedure. Your Colposcopist, a nurse to look after you during your procedure and a health care assistant to help. As we are a teaching hospital, there may be trainee doctors or nurses. If you wish, we can always ask them to leave the room however please appreciate that they need to learn too. The clinic does not always run to time, as some people need more time than others. We advise that you allow an hour for your appointment.

If I need any treatment will it be done on the day of my appointment?

Treatment can be offered on the same day if this is best for you, after discussion with your colposcopist. Usually, treatment on the same day is offered when the smear test has shown some changes called high grade. An information leaflet about treatment will be included with your appointment letter if required.

What does the treatment involve?

The colposcopist can remove the abnormal cells by

- Loop Excision. A thin wire loop is used through which a mild electrical current passes. The cells removed are then sent to the laboratory to be examined under a microscope.
- Diathermy heat treatment is sometimes used to destroy the abnormal cells.

Can I bring someone with me for the appointment?

Yes, if you wish they may stay with you during the procedure.

What can I expect afterwards?

This will depend on what you have had done. If the colposcopist has taken a small biopsy, then you may have some blood stained vaginal discharge for two to three days. You should avoid sexual intercourse for approximately one week to allow the biopsy site to heal. If the colposcopist has not taken a biopsy or carried out any form of treatment then you can resume normal sexual activity. If you have had treatment you may have a blood-stained vaginal discharge for three to four weeks. During this time it is important to use sanitary towels and not tampons until the cervix is healed. This is when you have had no bleeding or discharge for approximately 1 week, and you have had your next normal period.

What happens next?

We will write to you within four weeks to let you know what follow up you need, and where this will be.