



PATIENT INFORMATION

YOUR COLPOSCOPY PROCEDURE – PUNCH BIOPSY



The test that you have had today is called a punch biopsy. We have taken a tiny piece of tissue, the size of a grain of rice, from your cervix and we will send this to the laboratory. We will examine this closely to see if there are changes in the cells that need treatment.

What are the benefits of having this procedure?

We can often assess the cervix by only using colposcopy. However, sometimes we need to take a piece of tissue to help us make a diagnosis and decide if you need any treatment.

What should I normally expect after the procedure?

- You may feel discomfort like period pain for a few hours after the procedure. You should take your normal painkillers to ease this pain, but do not take more than the recommended dose.
- Usually, you will have a brown or red discharge from your vagina for two to four days after we take the piece of tissue. Do not worry if you do not have any discharge or if the discharge continues slightly longer than four days, as everyone's cervix heals differently.
- Do **not** use tampons for at least four to five days after the procedure, or until the discharge stops. Instead, use pads or panty liners.
- To reduce bleeding, we apply a mustard-like paste to the area we take the tissue from. When you pass this from your vagina, it may look like a yellowy-black plug.
- You can have a bath or shower as normal.

Are there any risks to this procedure?

Complications are very rare, but you may get an infection in the area we took the piece of tissue from. If this happens, you may need to take antibiotics.

Symptoms of an infection

- High temperature or strong smelling discharge
- Pain. You should take your normal painkillers to ease this pain, but do not take more than the recommend dose.

If you develop an infection, this may happen immediately after the biopsy is taken or any time within the next 14 days. If you have any of the above symptoms, it is very important that you contact your family doctor or the colposcopy clinic for advice, as you may need another examination or antibiotics.

Returning to normal activities

- You should be able to return to work and normal activities the same day you have your procedure. We recommend that you do not have sex or go swimming until the discharge stops, to allow the area to heal.

We will be writing to your GP to tell them that you have had this procedure.

We will send you a letter with your results which will explain if you need any more treatment or tests. If you do not receive this letter within eight weeks of your last visit to the clinic, please contact us.

Contact details

If you have any specific concerns that you feel have not been answered and need explaining, please contact the following.

- Sister Jo Underhill, Colposcopy Clinic, Alexandra Hospital (phone 01527 505739)
- Sister Debbie Wise, Kidderminster Hospital (phone 01527 505762)
- Sister Julie Brassington, Worcestershire Royal Hospital (phone 01527 512003)

Other information

The following internet websites contain information that you may find useful.

- www.worcsacute.nhs.uk
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- www.patient.co.uk
Information fact sheets on health and disease
- www.rcoa.ac.uk
Information leaflets by the Royal College of Anaesthetists about 'Having an anaesthetic'
- www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
On-line health encyclopaedia

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PET@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.