



Cervical Cancer Screening & Colposcopy

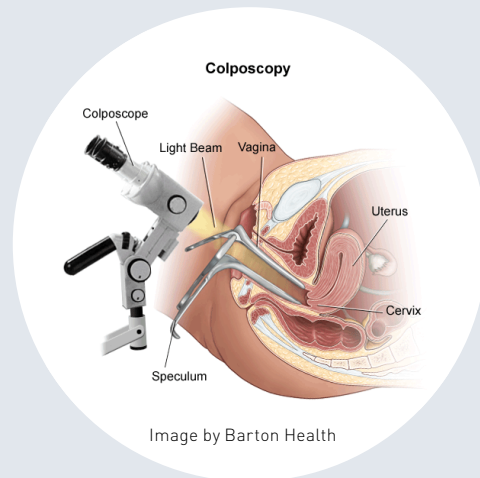
Your Pap smear or HIV test result is abnormal and you have been referred for colposcopy. What does this mean?

A Pap smear is a test to screen for cells on the cervix that have the potential to become cancerous in future. A HPV test detects the presence of HIV infection, which is the cause of almost all cervical cancers. While you may have an abnormal Pap smear or HPV test result, it does not mean that you have cancer. Early detection of these pre-cancerous changes is important because they can be completely treated.

The most common way to identify pre-cancerous changes on your cervix is by doing colposcopy.

What is colposcopy?

A colposcopy is a simple examination to allow the specialists to see the abnormal cells on your cervix. It is done using a colposcope which functions like a magnifying glass. It helps the doctor to examine the changes on your cervix and identify the most suitable treatment for you if needed.



What happens during colposcopy?

1. You will have a consultation with your specialist.
2. After the consultation, a nurse will bring you to the changing area where you will sit on a special couch.
3. Once you are comfortably positioned on the couch, a speculum is gently inserted into your vagina (similar to a Pap smear or HPV test) to hold the vaginal walls apart and allow your specialist to see your cervix clearly.
4. In order to identify abnormal cells on the cervix, your specialist will gently dab different liquids on your cervix which will highlight the abnormal cells.
5. If an abnormal area is identified, a small sample of tissue will be taken. This is called a cervical punch biopsy and it is the size of a pinhead. You may feel a slight stinging sensation when the biopsy is taken but it will not be painful.
6. The biopsy will be sent for analysis in the laboratory to check for any abnormal cells that will require treatment. The results take approximately one week to be processed.

Excluding the consultation session with your specialist, the entire procedure usually takes 15 minutes.

Doing a colposcopy can be very stressful for some. You may want to bring along your partner or a friend for support. It is also recommended to do the procedure when you are not menstruating.

What treatments are available?

There are several ways to treat pre-cancerous cells on the cervix. However, not every woman will require the same treatment. Your doctor will identify the most suitable treatment and discuss it with you.

All these treatments are well-tolerated by women. They are done either in the colposcopy clinic while you are awake or under general anaesthesia in theatre.

+ LEEP (Loop Excision Electrical Procedure)

This procedure is performed using a fine wire loop. An electrical current is passed through the wire loop and then used to cut away the abnormal area on the cervix.



+ Cone Biopsy

This is a minor operation where a small piece of the cervix, in a shape of a small cone containing the abnormal area, is removed from the cervix using either a laser, a surgical knife or by electrocautery.

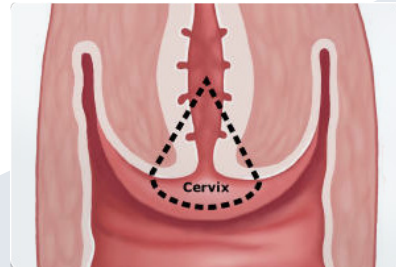


Image by Greff L Small MD

+ Laser Vaporisation

This procedure involves using a laser beam to remove the abnormal area.

+ Cold Coagulation

This is a simple procedure usually performed in the colposcopy clinic. The abnormal area is removed using a hot coagulation probe. The procedure takes about 45 – 60 seconds.

What if I am pregnant?

Colposcopy procedure is safe in pregnancy. However, treatment is usually carried out after you have delivered your baby if no cancerous cells are detected.

The procedure also does not induce early labour or affect your fertility.

What happens after colposcopy?

There is usually very little discomfort after the procedure.

- A brown-coloured paste called the Monsell's solution may be placed on your cervix. It acts like a liquid plaster to help stop any bleeding.
- You may notice some spotting or brownish discharge for a few days. It is usually advisable to avoid sexual intercourse or the use of tampons for two weeks to allow for healing.
- After treatment, you may feel mild abdominal pain that feels like period cramps. These cramps usually go away after taking mild painkillers i.e. Paracetamol.
- Your subsequent period may be a little heavier than usual but this is normal. However, if the bleeding is very heavy, please contact your doctor or the clinic. If it is after office hours, proceed to the nearest Emergency Department.

Will I need further check-ups after treatment?

Follow-up appointments are necessary after treatment to ensure that all abnormal areas have been treated and the cervix has healed well.

Your doctor will advise you on the plan for follow-up to ensure that the abnormal cells do not come back.

About the National University Centre for Women and Children

National University Centre for Women and Children (NUWoC) is a national university specialist centre that aims to empower women, children and their families to lead healthier lives. We provide comprehensive medical and surgical services ranging from pre-conception to child and maternal health.

NUWoC comprises the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology (O&G) and Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI) of National University Hospital. It focuses on the right-siting of appropriate services in the community and builds complementary services in National University Health System’s (NUHS) centres of excellence – Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Alexandra Hospital.

Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, KTP-NUCMI established an integrated outpatient facility with medical, diagnostic and rehabilitation services for children. We are also the only public specialist centre in Singapore that offers paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes.

For more information about us, visit www.nuh.com.sg/NUWoC.

Contact Us

Emergency (24-hr)

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1

Contact: +65 6772 5000

Women’s Clinic – Emerald/Ruby

Location: NUH Kent Ridge Wing, Zone D, Level 3, D03-06

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 6.00pm (Mon to Thu), 8.30am – 5.30pm (Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Women’s Clinic – Sapphire

Location: NUH Kent Ridge Wing, Zone D, Level 3, D03-03

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 6.00pm (Mon to Thu), 8.30am – 5.30pm (Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Women’s Clinic – Jade [Former Clinic G]

Location: NUH Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 3, C03-02

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 6.00pm (Mon to Thu), 8.30am – 5.30pm (Fri)

Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Fetal Care Centre

Location: NUH Kent Ridge Wing, Zone D, Level 3, D03-04

Operating Hours: 8.00am – 5.30pm (Mon to Thu), 8.00am – 5.00pm (Fri)

Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Clinic for Human Reproduction

Location: NUH Kent Ridge Wing, Zone D, Level 4

Operating Hours: 8.00am – 5.00pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

Women’s Clinic @ JMC

Location: Jurong Medical Centre, Level 2

Operating Hours: 8.50am – 11.30pm (Tue & Thu), 2.00pm – 5.00pm (Mon & Fri)

Jurong Clinic for Women

Location: 130 Jurong Gateway, #01-231

Operating Hours: 9.00am – 12.00pm, 2.00pm – 5.00pm (Mon to Sat), 6.00pm – 9.00pm (Mon to Thu)

General Enquiry: +65 6665 4277

Appointment Line: +65 6908 2222

Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

GS @ NTFGH

Location: Clinic A73 & A74 Surgery, Tower A – NTFGH, Level 7

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

Appointment Line: +65 6908 2222

Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg



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