



COLPOSCOPY

A colposcopy is a detailed examination of the cervix using a special magnifying instrument called a colposcope. During the procedure, the doctor applies a vinegar solution to the cervix and vagina. The vinegar makes abnormal tissue turn white so your doctor can identify areas that may need further evaluation.

If your doctor sees areas of abnormal tissue during the procedure, he or she may perform a biopsy. A biopsy involves removing small samples of tissues from any abnormal areas. You may feel mild cramps and pinching when he or she removes the abnormal tissue. Relaxing your muscles as much as possible and taking slow, deep breaths during the procedure may help. The procedure takes approximately 15 minutes.

Risks or Complications

Colposcopy is a relatively safe procedure. However, there are possible risks and complications with any procedure. Possible risks and complications are infection or an unexpected reaction to anaesthesia.

Before the Procedure

Do not douche, use tampons or use vaginal medicines for 24 hours before your biopsy. You may wish to take a pain reliever, such as Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin, if not allergic) 30-60 minutes before the procedure. This may help decrease any cramping that may occur during and/or after the biopsy.

After the Procedure

You may feel lightheaded or dizzy immediately after the procedure. Taking slow deep breaths may help.

You may feel some tenderness for a day or two. Some vaginal bleeding or discharge is normal for up to a week. The discharge may be dark in color and/or look like coffee grounds. This is normal and is the fluid that is painted on your cervix during the procedure. Use sanitary pads. Do not use tampons.

You may shower and bathe as normal. Plain water is best. Do not rub the area. Gently pat the area dry.

No strenuous exercise or heavy lifting for one week or as directed by your surgeon.

Ask your surgeon when you may resume sexual intercourse.

It usually takes 1-2 weeks for your doctor to get a report from the pathologist.

Call your doctor if you experience:

- Heavy vaginal bleeding (more than one sanitary pad per hour)
- Increased pain not relieved by pain medication
- Fever and/chills
- Foul smelling vaginal odour and/or drainage

Special Instructions

Follow-up appointment

Developed By: Surgical Services
Approved By: Department of Gynecology, Quinte Health Care
Created: May2009