

Women's Services

The colposcopy examination

Coming for colposcopy

You have an appointment to attend the colposcopy clinic. This leaflet explains what may be involved. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference.

If you cannot attend your appointment, please telephone the colposcopy co-ordinators, giving as much notice as possible so that your appointment can be used by someone else.

Why you need a colposcopy

Following your recent visit to your doctor you have been referred to the colposcopy clinic for a more detailed examination.

What is colposcopy?

Colposcopy is looking at the neck of the womb (cervix), vagina and/or vulva with a magnifying instrument called a colposcope. The procedure is performed in the outpatient clinic. It is simple, quick and generally painless.

A general anaesthetic is **not** required and you can therefore eat and drink as normal. You may wish to bring someone with you.

When you come for your appointment

The procedure takes approximately 15-20 minutes.

When you arrive at the clinic you will be checked in by the receptionist. If your name, address or GP has changed since your appointment was made, please telephone the clinic co-ordinator on 01223 216603 before you come, so that your records can be amended before you arrive.

If you would like to talk to a trained nurse before seeing the colposcopist, please inform the co-ordinator or receptionist.

Occasionally there are observers within the clinic, such as medical/nursing students and practice nurses. If you do not want them to be present during your appointment, please tell the receptionist on arrival.

You will see a Colposcopist and there will be nurses who will support you during the procedure.

You will have a consultation where you will be asked relevant questions about your symptoms/reason for referral. If relevant you will be asked to give the date of the first day of your last period. Colposcopy or treatment cannot be performed if you are having a period. **However, if you have been referred because of abnormal vaginal bleeding then it is very important that you attend your appointment.**

If you are pregnant, what will happen?

If you are pregnant it is still important that you attend for a colposcopy. A colposcopy can be safely performed in pregnancy.

What happens during the examination?

You will lie on a special couch with your legs well supported. Depending on the reasons why you have been referred, a metal speculum **may** be inserted into the vagina (similar to having a smear taken) to enable the colposcopist to obtain a good view of your cervix/vagina.

The colposcope does not go inside you. You can watch the procedure, if you wish, on the TV screen that is by your side. You may have swabs taken to exclude infection. A cervical sample (smear) may be taken and possibly a small biopsy. The colposcopist will explain exactly what they are doing and discuss any procedures with you.

Depending on what procedure you have had (if any), you will be given aftercare advice and written information to take home with you. Although you are very unlikely to have anything seriously wrong with you. If you feel anxious or worried please ask to talk to a trained nurse about your treatment.

If you have any queries **before** your appointment and would like to speak to the colposcopy nurse please ring 01223 216603, Monday to Friday 09:00 to 16:00. If you leave a message on the answer phone someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Useful Contact numbers

For appointments or queries:

- Colposcopy co-ordinators: Mrs M Smith, Mrs R Segrave, Mrs L Smith.
Telephone 01223 216603
- Colposcopy/Hysteroscopy Nurse Practitioner: Mrs Kay Welton.
Telephone 01223 216603
- Nurse Colposcopist: Sister Joyce Eletu-Odibo. Telephone 01223 256139

An answer phone is available out of office hours and when the telephone is unmanned. If you use the answer phone, please leave your name, hospital number and any message and we will get back to you as soon as possible



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



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