NHS
Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Other information

Please let us know if you wish to be seen by a female doctor or nurse; we will try to arrange this for you.

If you are having your period, you may still have the examination. If you prefer, you may change your appointment.

The colposcopy examination will take about 20 minutes.

Treatment for abnormal cells has little or no effect on your chances of becoming pregnant or on your risk of miscarriage.

Facts:

- **One in ten smear tests are abnormal.**
- **Colposcopy examinations are very common.**
- **It is very rare for abnormal cells to be cancer.**

Further sources of information

Translations of leaflets:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cervical-screening-description-in-brief
NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions
Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET) is available to help with any compliments, concerns or complaints: 01623 672222 Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

Contact the Colposcopy coordinators (King's Mill Hospital/Newark Hospital) on 01623 622515, extension 3988.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or need help with communication (for example British Sign Language), please contact 01623 622515 or email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net.

This document is for information purposes only and should not replace advice from your healthcare professional. External websites are provided for convenience and we are not responsible for their content. For a full list of references (if relevant), please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Colposcopy

Outstanding Care,
Compassionate People,
Healthier Communities

You have been asked to have a colposcopy

Being referred for a colposcopy does not mean you have cervical cancer.

A colposcopy is a simple examination that allows a doctor or specialist nurse to take a closer look at your cervix (the neck of the womb) using a colposcope, which is a magnifying instrument with a bright light.

The colposcope stays outside your body and does not go inside you.

The examination should not be painful and is usually no more uncomfortable than having a cervical screening (smear) test.

If abnormal cells are found, treatment may be recommended. In many cases; this treatment is very effective at preventing cervical cancer.

What might happen at your appointment

At your appointment, your doctor or specialist nurse will first explain your results and ask you a few questions about your history or symptoms.

You will be asked to undress from the waist down and lie on an examination couch. A female assistant will be with you throughout.

A speculum will be gently inserted into your vagina, similar to a cervical screening (smear) test. The doctor or nurse will then examine your cervix using a colposcope. A liquid solution may be used to highlight abnormal cells. A biopsy (small sample of tissue) may be taken from the cervix.

Treatment to remove abnormal cells may be offered at the same appointment.

Important

If biopsy or treatment is needed, this may be carried out during your first visit. In some cases, you may be asked to return for a separate appointment.

Biopsy

Sometimes a very small sample of tissue is taken from the surface of the cervix. This is called a biopsy. You may have light bleeding or discharge for a few days afterwards. You should avoid vaginal sex for two to three days to allow your cervix to heal.

The doctor or nurse will explain how and when you will receive your biopsy results.

Treatment

Not all abnormal cell changes need treatment, as some return to normal on their own. Your doctor or nurse will explain if treatment is needed for you. If treatment is needed, it may be done at your first appointment or a follow-up visit. A local anaesthetic is used, and you can drive yourself home afterwards.

For appointment enquiries, contact the Colposcopy coordinators (King's Mill Hospital/Newark Hospital) on 01623 622515, extension 3988.

If you feel unwell or develop worrying symptoms after a colposcopy, you should call NHS 111 for urgent medical advice or go to your nearest Emergency Department.