

Cervical Polypectomy

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What is a polyp?

Your doctor/nurse has advised you to have a polypectomy, which is the removal of a polyp. A polyp is a flesh-like structure (often described as looking like a cherry on a stalk or a skin tag), which can develop in many places in the body, including the cervix and uterus. It may have blood vessels running through it, which can often be the cause of bleeding.

If it is thought the polyp is in your uterus, you will need to have a hysteroscopy (a procedure that uses a narrow camera to look inside the cavity of the uterus). This procedure is carried out as a gynaecology outpatient appointment and is performed in a special clinic in the diagnostic suite. You will receive a further appointment for this treatment and be given a different leaflet to explain the hysteroscopy procedure.

If for any reason the polyp cannot be removed or fully removed during either of these treatments, the doctor will advise you of other options.

Reasons for the procedure

As you know you have been referred to the colposcopy clinic because you have a polyp on the cervix. Sometimes the cervical polyp is broad-based, where it does not have a stalk but sits on the cervix. Often they cause no symptoms and are found as a result of other examinations. Polyps are usually benign (non-cancerous). Less than 1% (1 in 100) may have pre-cancerous or cancerous changes within them; it is therefore advisable to have them removed.

A polypectomy is the removal of polyps.

A polyp is a small overgrowth of tissue which is usually innocent, but needs to be removed for analysis and to prevent it causing you abnormal bleeding.

Nature of the procedure

A polyp is usually easily removed in clinic and normally does not cause any pain during removal. If the polyp is on your cervix this may be able to be removed during your outpatient appointment, using polyp forceps.

You will be asked undress from the waist down and to lie on a couch. Once you are comfortable, a speculum will be inserted into your vagina, allowing us to see your cervix; this is just like when you have a smear test. The polyp forceps are then used to gently twist the polyp off.

We are aware you may find these treatments embarrassing. We will do our best to support you and will make every effort to ensure your privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.

If the polyp is broad-based, a local anaesthetic is injected into the cervix to numb the area. A heated wire loop is used to shave the polyp off. The tissue is then sent to the laboratory for analysis.

Benefits of the procedure

The benefit of this procedure is to remove the polyp and send it to the laboratory for examination to exclude any serious abnormalities

Discomforts of the procedure

This procedure feels very similar to having a smear taken. The procedure is not painful although you may experience a dull ache while it is being carried out. Pain relief is not usually needed during or after the procedure but you can take your normal pain relief tablets (following the recommended dosage) if necessary.

Risks of the procedure

The procedure is very low risk but may cause excessive bleeding or infection. Following the procedure you will experience some bleeding and discharge for approximately 4 weeks.

If your loss becomes excessive or offensive please contact your GP or St. Helens Colposcopy Clinic on **01744 646301**

You may have some watery discharge or get some light bleeding following the procedure. We recommend that you wear sanitary pads (not tampons) until your next period and avoid sexual intercourse until the discharge stops.

If you have had the polyp twisted off the discharge may last up to one week. If a heated wire loop has been used the light bleeding may last up to 4 weeks.

You may have some crampy pains for a few hours after the procedure. You may take some simple painkillers for this, following the dosage instructions.

Alternatives to the procedure

There is an option to leave well alone if you feel you can cope with the symptoms the polyp may be causing if any.

Consequences of not having the procedure

The polyp may become bigger and cause you to have abnormal bleeding. Most polyps are benign but very rarely they could contain abnormal cells.

Please note this treatment may not be done whilst on a period especially when heavy. However, if you are experiencing abnormal or irregular bleeding please contact the clinic for advice on

01744 646301

What happens to the polyps?

We always send the removed tissue for testing in a laboratory. This is routine. If you need any further treatment, we will write to you with the results of the histology (analysis of the tissue) within six weeks.

Following a polypectomy you will normally receive results in approximately 3-4 weeks by letter to your home address.

Depending on these results you will either be discharged or reviewed in colposcopy.

Advice following the polypectomy

You can carry on as normal following the procedure as it will not cause any restrictions to your daily routine.

If you get an offensive discharge or heavy bleeding you should arrange to see your GP as you may have an infection.

We also suggest that you avoid long soaks in the bath and bubble baths until your discharge has stopped.

Following a polypectomy you will normally receive results in approximately 4-6 weeks by letter to your home address.


Depending on these results you will either be discharged back to the care of your GP or reviewed in colposcopy clinic at a future date.

It is hospital policy not to give results over the telephone.

Important notice

If you are unable to attend for your appointment please telephone the clinic in advance so that your appointment can be given to someone else

**If you have any urgent problems out of clinic hours
Please contact Ward 3E on
0151 430 1522**



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