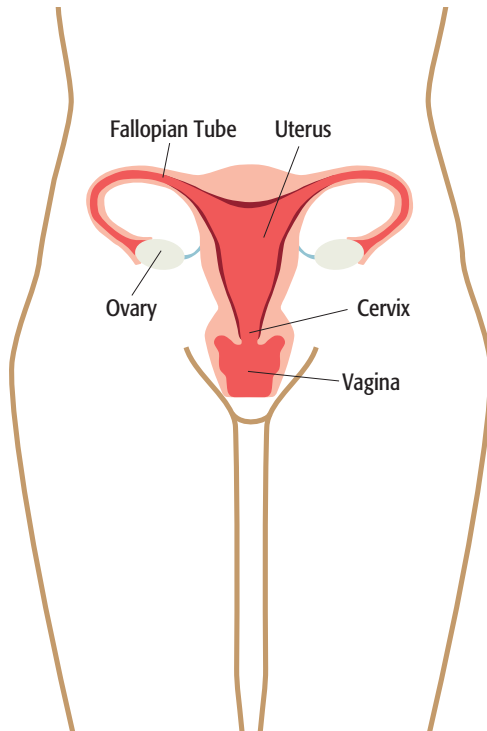


Colposcopy



Colposcopy is a simple procedure used to examine the cervix. The cervix is located at the lower part of the uterus and at the top of the vagina. Colposcopy is used to follow up abnormal cervical cancer screening test (e.g. PAP smear, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) testing) or abnormal areas seen on the cervix.

The colposcope magnifies the appearance of the cervix. With colposcope the clinician can see where the abnormal cells are located and determine which area or areas may need to be biopsied. This information will further determine how severe the abnormality is and also help to determine what treatment, if any, is needed. When monitored and treated early, precancerous areas usually do not develop into cervical cancer.

Preparing for colposcopy

Colposcopy is performed between menstruations. Prior to the procedure it is recommended to eat a full meal and to take painkillers, such as Ibuprofen 400 mg and Paracetamol 1000 mg, two to three hours before arriving to the hospital.

Reception and check-in is situated on the first floor of the Women's Hospital at Landspítali, Hringbraut. A nurse will attend to those who arrive for surgery in the waiting area.

Colposcopy procedure

Colposcopy is performed in a similar way as a gynecological examination. A gynecological instrument called vaginal speculum is placed in the vagina to hold open the vaginal walls. The cervix is examined using a microscope. Small tissue samples (1-2 mm) are taken from the cervix for diagnosis. Sometimes a sample is taken from inside the cervix. The whole procedure takes approximately 15-20 minutes.

After colposcopy

In most cases, nothing contraindicates returning to work or school directly after the examination. The sampling will leave a small wound on the cervix. For the wound to heal as quickly as possible and to avoid infection, for the next 10 days the following is recommended:

- Avoid going to the swimming pools and hot tubs
- Avoid the usage of tampons and menstrual cups
- Avoid having sex

Pain and painkillers

It is normal to feel mild pain after the examination. For those who need painkillers, it is recommended to take Paracetamol and Ibuprofen. The maximum dosage of each is:

- Paracetamol: 1000 mg four times in 24-hours
- Ibuprofen: 400 mg four times in 24-hours

Bleeding

For 3-5 days after the procedure, a small amount of bleeding or brown discharge can be expected from the vagina. The examination does not affect the menstrual cycle, meaning that your regular period should begin on time.

Further information

In most cases, further testing and treatment will depend on the results of the biopsy. Information on the results should be delivered within three weeks.

Smoking increases risk of cervical cancer. By quitting smoking, it is possible to reduce the risk of cervical cancer.

If any of the following symptoms arise in the first two weeks after the procedure, please contact the Emergency Gynecology ward at Landspítali, Hringbraut:

- Body temperature is higher than 38°C.
- Heavy vaginal bleeding filling large pads (night pads or something similar) within 30 minutes for more than two hours.
- Foul smelling discharge from the vagina for more than seven days
- Severe abdominal pain and recommended painkillers do not relieve the pain.

If the matter is urgent or cannot wait until next day, please contact Landspítali's Main Desk, tel.: 543 1000 and ask for the Emergency Gynecology ward at the Women's Hospital (21AM).

In case of emergency please contact 112.

Contact information

- The reception at the Gynecology Outpatient Ward (21AM) is open on business days between 08:00 and 16:00, tel.: 543 3224.
- Landspítali's Main Desk (Emergency Gynecology ward at the Women's Hospital), tel.: 543 1000.

For the first two weeks following the procedure, the Outpatient and Emergency Gynecology ward at Landspítali Hospital can be contacted directly for any problems or questions that arise. After the first two weeks after examination, please contact your Local Health Care Clinic.

