

About Your Colposcopy

What is a colposcopy?

A colposcopy procedure is like a pelvic exam. A large microscope, called a *colposcope*, is used to look for abnormal tissue in the cervix or vagina.

Why is a colposcopy done?

This procedure is suggested for women who have an abnormal Pap test and women with vaginal or cervical warts. It offers a closer look so that the doctor can tell if further testing or treatment is needed.

How is it done?

A colposcopy is done like a pelvic exam in the doctor's office. It takes about 15 to 20 minutes, and usually causes little or no discomfort. This is a safe test for pregnant women. If abnormal tissue is found during the colposcopy, one or more biopsies may be taken. This could cause a very brief pinching or cramping sensation.

What is a biopsy?

A biopsy is a small sample of tissue taken from an abnormal-looking area. The sample is sent to the lab to test for any signs of cancer. Results of the biopsy tell the doctor if the abnormal tissue needs to be removed.

What do I need to know before my colposcopy?

- Do not douche or put anything inside your vagina for 2 days before your test.
- It's best not to be menstruating at the time of your test. Keep that in mind when your test is being scheduled.

What do I need to know after my colposcopy?

- If no biopsies are taken during your test, you may resume all of your normal activities.
- If biopsies are taken, you may have some vaginal spotting.
- Do not have sexual intercourse for 2 days.

Please make an appointment for results if biopsies are done. You may get a call in 3 to 4 days with results.

Call your nurse or doctor if you have:

- Pelvic pain
- Heavy bleeding
- Foul-smelling discharge
- Temperature above 100.4° F