



BASIC INFORMATION

DEFINITION

A microscopic examination of the cervix used to diagnose potential abnormalities of the cervix and vagina. Because the colposcope magnifies the tissue by up to 30 times, as well as illuminates the areas to be examined, cervical biopsies performed with a colposcopic examination are more accurate than those done without the use of a colposcope.

REASONS FOR PROCEDURE

It is usually recommended following an abnormal Pap smear test and to select the best area for a biopsy, if needed.

RISK

None expected.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURE

- The colposcope is a binocular microscope used to visualize the cervix.
- You will recline on an examining table (as if for a pelvic examination). A speculum is inserted into the vagina to expose the cervix.
- A stain or other chemical agent may be used to help improve the visualization.
- The wheeled colposcope is positioned in front of the vaginal opening and the doctor can locate the abnormalities, determine their extent and possibly identify the cause. Results of the visual examination are available immediately.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

The procedure should take about 15 minutes and, in itself, cause no discomfort. The instrument never enters the body. If a biopsy is done or endocervical curettage is performed, these procedures may cause some cramping or bleeding.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

A biopsy done in conjunction with a colposcopy may cause some bleeding and, rarely, an infection.



POSTPROCEDURE CARE

GENERAL MEASURES

You may bathe or shower as usual.

MEDICATION

Medication is usually not necessary following this procedure.

ACTIVITY

No restrictions.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

Following the procedure:

- You develop unexplained vaginal bleeding or swelling.
- Vaginal discharge increases or begins to have an unusual odor.
- You develop signs of infection, including headache, muscle aches, dizziness or a general ill feeling and fever.