

# Having a punch biopsy of the cervix

Produced: Apr 2026

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Review: Apr 2029

Information for Patients

Leaflet Number: 515 Version 3

## Introduction

The test that you have had today is called a **punch biopsy**. We have taken a tiny piece of tissue the size of a grain of rice from your cervix. This tissue will be sent to the laboratory where it will be examined under a microscope to see if there are any changes on the cells that need treatment.

## What are the benefits of having this procedure?

We can usually get all the information we need to assess the cervix by doing a colposcopy using specialised equipment to have a detailed look at the cervix. However sometimes we need to take a punch biopsy to help us make a diagnosis and decide if you will need any treatment.

## What should I expect after the biopsy?

- You may feel discomfort (similar to period pain) for a few hours after the procedure. You should take your normal painkillers to ease the pain but do not take more than the recommended dose.
- You will probably have a brown, red or grey discharge from your vagina for about four days after the punch biopsy. Do not worry if you do not have any discharge or if the discharge continues slightly longer than four days everyone's cervix heals differently.
- Do **not** use tampons for about seven days after the procedure as this can disturb the area as it is healing.
- You can shower as normal but avoid having a bath on the day of your procedure.

## Are there any risks to this procedure?

Complications are very rare, however:

- you may get an infection in the area we took the piece of tissue from. If this happens you may need to take antibiotics. Symptoms of an infection are a high temperature or strong-smelling discharge from your vagina.

- there is a small risk that the biopsy may not be enough to analyse and we may need to repeat the biopsy

If you develop an infection, this may happen immediately after the punch biopsy of the cervix or any time within the next fourteen days. If you have any of the above symptoms it is very important that you contact your GP or the Colposcopy Nurse Specialists for advice as you may need another examination or antibiotics.

## Returning to normal activities

You should be able to return to work and normal activities the same day you have your procedure. We recommend that you do not have sex or go swimming for about seven days after the procedure and avoid heavy exercise/lifting for the next couple of days. This will reduce the risk of bleeding and infection and allow the area to heal.

## Follow-Up

We will be writing to your GP to tell them that you have had this procedure.

We will send your results in a letter which will explain if you need any more treatment or tests. If you do not receive this letter within 8 weeks of your last visit to the clinic please contact us.

## Useful contacts

If you have any questions about your treatment, phone us using the following numbers:

### Colposcopy Nurse Specialist secretaries:

0116 2585068

0116 2584167

Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit [www.uhleicester.nhs.uk](http://www.uhleicester.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals.

To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net](mailto:uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net)

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