

Cone Biopsy

Patient Information – Gynaecology Services

What is a cone biopsy?

A cone biopsy is a minor surgical procedure; a cone shaped piece of the cervix that contains abnormal cells is removed. These cells are sent to the pathology lab for further testing.

Your doctor will explain the procedure to you and answer any questions you may have.

Why do I need this procedure?

Your colposcopy examination has shown abnormal cells are present. The cone biopsy procedure is carried out to remove these abnormal cells from your cervix, if left untreated there would be a risk of these cells developing into cancer in the future.

What are the risks of this procedure?

There are some risks associated with a cone biopsy procedure, these risks are outweighed by the benefit of removing the abnormal cells from your cervix.

- Bleeding—may require treatment in hospital.
- Infection—treated with antibiotics.
- Scarring from the procedure which may cause the cervix to narrow and make taking a smear more difficult.
- Future pregnancies—it is important to tell your midwife or obstetrician that you have had a cone biopsy so that, if necessary, you can be monitored more closely. There is a small chance your cervix could be weakened with the small possibility of miscarriage or early birth.
- Having a cone biopsy does not seem to affect your ability to conceive.

What type of anaesthetic will I have?

This procedure will be carried out in the day surgery unit, you will have a general anaesthetic (you will be asleep).

You will be provided with information about how to prepare for your general anaesthetic, eg. eating and drinking.

You are welcome to bring a support person with you, but they will not be able to come into the operating theatre.

What can I expect after the procedure?

This is a minor procedure and you will normally be able to go home the same day.

You may experience some crampy discomfort similar to period pain and this can be managed with medication that you would normally use.

It is normal to have some vaginal bleeding/discharge for up to 2-4 weeks.

As you have had a general anaesthetic you will need someone to take you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours after the procedure.

You may need to take a couple of days off work; we can provide a medical certificate.

When can I get back to normal activities?

To reduce the risk of infection, while you have vaginal bleeding or discharge:

- Do not use tampons (use sanitary pads)
- Avoid sexual intercourse for 2-4 weeks
- Have a shower, rather than a bath
- Do not use a spa or hot pool
- Avoid vigorous exercise for at least 2 weeks. Normal day-to-day activities including walking are fine.

What are the possible complications, who do I contact?

If you experience any of these problems, contact your GP or after hours clinic.

If it is an emergency call an ambulance (111).

- Heavy vaginal bleeding (bright red)
- Severe pain
- High temperature – above 37.4°C
- Vaginal discharge which is heavy or smelly

What follow up will I require?

- You will receive a letter with the results of your cone biopsy within 6 weeks of your procedure.
- If you do not receive your results please phone the Colposcopy Clinic (03) 364 4466
- A follow-up appointment at the Colposcopy Clinic will be sent to you within the next 12 months. This letter will also outline what follow up is recommended and when.

For more information about:

hospital and specialist services, go to www.cdhb.health.nz | your health and medication, go to www.healthinfo.org.nz