

# Having a diathermy loop excision (LLETZ) / under a general anaesthetic

## Introduction

Welcome to the Colposcopy Clinic. This leaflet aims to help women who are having a diathermy loop excision under general anaesthetic.

## What is a diathermy loop excision?

Diathermy loop excision (also known as LLETZ) is a treatment for abnormal cervical cells from the neck of the womb (cervix) using a heated wire loop.

## Why do I need a diathermy loop excision?

When you had your last colposcopy examination, some abnormal pre-cancerous cells were found and a cervical biopsy may have confirmed this. These need to be treated to stop them developing.

## Why do I need to come as a day patient to have this done?

It was not possible to treat you in the clinic as you may have found the procedure quite uncomfortable or the area for treatment was too large to treat safely. Therefore, it is being carried out under a general anaesthetic (i.e. you are asleep) in the Day Surgery Unit; however, you will be able to go home the same day.

## Will I have to wait long for this procedure?

No. You will be given an appointment in the near future. There is not a long waiting list for this procedure.

Holidays/travel abroad - If you plan to travel abroad for holiday or work it may be advisable to postpone treatment until after the trip. If you are planning an extended trip abroad, please ring the Colposcopy Department on 0118 322 7197 / 7283 for advice. Please note that if you travel abroad you may not be covered by the insurance company should any complications related to the treatment occur. Please check with your insurance company.

## Do I have to come to the hospital again before my operation?

Yes. You will be asked to come to our 'pre-operative assessment clinic'. This will be one or two weeks before your operation. This is a standard procedure to prepare you for the operation. It is important for you to attend the appointment. Please allow at least one hour for your appointment.

### Will I have pain after my operation?

You may experience slight abdominal discomfort – rather like period pains. The staff will offer you pain relief if you need it.

### Will it affect my sex life?

While your cervix is healing it is vulnerable to infection. You may also experience some bleeding for up to 4-6 weeks after. For these reasons, you are advised not to have sex for four weeks or until any bleeding or discharge has stopped completely.

### Will I still be able to have babies?

This procedure should not affect your ability to have babies in the future. Diathermy loop excisions can lead to a weakening of the cervical muscle that in turn may affect a pregnancy before term or earlier. Research shows that it can lead to babies being delivered a little earlier than expected. This should have no effect on the baby.

### Will I need to see the doctor again?

Usually, the doctor will contact you and your GP directly with your results. This can take up to 4-6 weeks. Unfortunately, we are unable to give results over the telephone.

You will need a further smear test in six months' time. You will be informed by letter whether this will be done at your GP's surgery or back at the Colposcopy Clinic.

### Useful contacts

We hope this information will be useful for you. If there is anything you do not understand or if you have any questions, please ask the clinic nurse or telephone us:

Colposcopy Office 0118 322 7197 (general enquiries)

Shareen Toofany, Lead Nurse Colposcopist 0118 322 7283 (clinical enquiries)

The Colposcopy Clinic is located on Sonning Ward, Level 5 Maternity Block, Craven Road

### Useful websites

1. Women talking about their experience of cervical screening: [www.healthtalkonline.org](http://www.healthtalkonline.org)
2. [www.bsccp.org.uk](http://www.bsccp.org.uk)
3. [www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk](http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk)

For more information about the Trust, visit our website at [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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