

**Introduction**

Colposcopy is a procedure to closely examine your cervix, vagina and vulva for signs of disease. During colposcopy, your doctor uses a special instrument called a colposcope. Abnormal Pap smear results or repeated episodes of vaginal bleeding after sexual intercourse may signal cervical disease, premalignant changes or even cervical cancer. Examination by colposcopy allows early diagnosis of the condition.

**The operation**

Colposcopy is a direct examination of the cervix, vagina and vaginal opening (vulva). Doctor will use a special lighted microscope (colposcope,) to illuminate the cervix and magnify the images of the cervical and vaginal surface. A special liquid is used to highlight the abnormal tissue. Often the doctor might need to take a small bite of tissue (biopsy) from the affected area for pathological examination

**Preoperative preparation**

1. Admit 1 day before or on same day as scheduled elective operation.
2. Anaesthetic assessment. **Inform your doctors / nurses** about allergy history (drug / food / non-drug), regular medications or other medical conditions.
3. Keep fast (water & food) for 6 to 8 hours before operation (Except for Local Anesthesia).
4. Change operation clothes & empty bladder 30mins - 1hour before transferring to operating room.
5. Pre-medication, prophylactic antibiotic and intravenous line may be required.
6. Refrain from douching, vaginal medication and tampons or have sexual intercourse 24 hours before colposcopy.

**Postoperative Instruction**

- A. **General**
1. For General Anaesthesia: Mild throat discomfort or pain due to intubation. Nausea or vomiting are common; inform nurses if symptoms severe.
  2. Mild discomfort or pain over the lower abdomen. Inform nurse or doctor if pain severe or more analgesics are required.
  3. Can mobilize and get out of bed 6 hours after operation, inform if need for help.
- B. **Diet**      Nurse will inform you when you can resume diet (Fluid / Congee / Soft / Ordinary diet) after anaesthesia.

**Common Risks and Complications** (not all possible complications are listed)

For colposcopy procedure alone, complication seldomly happens. The following complications may happen when large piece of biopsy tissue were taken or happened if other medical conditions had not been revealed to the doctor's attention before the procedure .

**A. Anaesthesia related**

1. Toxicity of local anaesthetic injected around the site of operation may result in severe but rare complications.
2. Allergic reaction and shock.
3. Cardiovascular: myocardial infarction or ischaemia, stroke, deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism (General Anaesthesia).
4. Respiratory: atelectasis, pneumonia, asthmatic attack, exacerbation of chronic obstructive airway disease (General Anaesthesia).

**B. Procedure related (If Biopsy is taken)**

1. Pelvic pain
2. Wound infection / Abscess formation
3. Bleeding (may require re-operation to evacuate the blood clot)

**Things to take note after discharge**

1. Contact your doctor or inform Ward (Tel: 2/F: 2760 3451, 4/F: 2760 3406) if severe abdominal pain / heavy bleeding is noted.
2. Take analgesics prescribed by your doctor if required.
3. Resume daily activity gradually (according to individual situation).
4. Avoid sexual intercourse, vaginal douching or placing tampons in vaginal in the four weeks following a cervical biopsy.
5. If cervical biopsy is performed, small amount of bleeding is normal.
6. Attend Doctor's clinic as scheduled for follow up.

**Remarks**

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information please contact your doctor. Evangel Hospital reserves the right to amend this leaflet without prior notice. We welcome suggestions or enquiries on the information provided in this leaflet. Please contact our Healthcare professionals so that we could follow up and make improvement.

**Reference**

Mayo Clinic: "Colposcopy"  
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/colposcopy/about/pac-20385036> (16/01/2024)