When can I return to normal activities?

- You should be able to return to work and normal activities the day after you have your procedure.
- You should avoid intense exercise or lifting anything heavy for a day or so after the procedure.
- We recommend that you do not have sex or go swimming until the discharge stops, to allow the area to heal.
- You can have a bath or shower as normal.

What follow-up is needed?

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

It is also important to remember to continue your routine cervical screening tests.

Advice before the treatment

If you have heavy vaginal bleeding on your appointment date, please call us for advice.

You can eat and drink normally before coming to the clinic, unless we specified otherwise, as in the case of those requiring general anaesthetics.

Further Information

If you have any queries which have not been addressed in this leaflet, please contact the Colposcopy Clinic directly on 0121 6272698
Your Procedure

The treatment that you have being offered is called 'cervical cauterisation'. During this procedure we use heat (diathermy) to treat the cells on the neck of the womb (cervix). This then encourages fragile delicate cells to grow into new and stronger cells which are less likely to cause discharge or irregular bleeding.

You were offered this procedure as you may have presented to us with bleeding after sexual intercourse or symptoms of excessive vaginal discharge and have an 'ectropion'.

An ectropion is where the cells from the lining of the womb, which are thinner and more fragile, are exposed on the neck of the womb. These cells are more delicate and can bleed easily on contact and tend to produce more discharge.

This is related to a normal hormonal effect on your cervix. Therefore, it is sometimes seen in people who are taking the combined oral contraceptive pill.

What are the benefits of having this procedure?

The majority of women have an improvement of their symptoms after this procedure. However, in some cases the symptoms may return, sometime in the future, due to the continued action of your hormones on the cervix.

What does the procedure involve?

This procedure is usually done as a day case while you are awake.

- A ‘speculum’ is used to visualise your cervix (just like when getting a smear test done).
- Following local anaesthetic a probe is used to apply heat to the area of the cervix which needs treatment.

This procedure only takes a few minutes and is generally very well tolerated.

A nurse will be present with you during the whole procedure.

However, for a minority of women, sometimes we need to perform this procedure under general anaesthesia. We do this if we cannot easily visualise the cervix and you are not tolerating the procedure well.

This would be done at a later appointment.

What should I normally expect after the procedure?

You may feel some period-like discomfort for a few hours after the procedure. You can take your normal painkillers (such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen) if you need to, but do not take more than the recommended dose.

It is generally advisable to be accompanied by an adult who can be with you after the treatment.

Usually, you will have a brown or red discharge from your vagina for up to four weeks after you have the procedure. Do not worry if you do not have any discharge or if the discharge continues slightly longer than four weeks, as everyone's cervix heals differently.

Do not use tampons for at least four weeks after the procedure, or until the discharge stops. Instead, use pads or panty liners.

You should avoid intercourse for at least three to four weeks, or until you have no further vaginal discharge.

Are there any risks to this procedure?

Complications are very rare, but you may get an infection in the area where you had the treatment.

Symptoms of an infection includes

- Heavy bleeding or strong-smelling discharge.
- High temperature.
- Significant pain.

If you develop an infection, this could happen immediately after treatment or any time within the next 14 days. If you have any of the above symptoms, it is very important that you contact your family doctor or the colposcopy clinic for advice, as you may need another examination or antibiotics.