

Vulvoscopy and Vulval Biopsy Information Leaflet

Introduction

This leaflet has been produced to give you general information about your vulvoscopy. Most of your questions should have been answered by this leaflet. It is not intended to replace the discussion between you and the specialists (Dr.Kaur or Dr.Arun), but may act as a starting point for discussion. If after reading it you have any concerns or require further explanation, please discuss this with the Gynaecologist.

What is a Vulvoscopy?

A Vulvoscopy is the examination of the vulva area using a microscope called a Colposcope. The vulva area consists of the labia (the two pairs of skin folds outside the female genitals) and the clitoris. A weak solution of Acetic Acid (vinegar) is applied on the vulva which turns abnormal cells white compared to the normal cells



Why do I need a Vulvoscopy?

A Vulvoscopy may be recommended if you have:

- Vulva pain or soreness
- Any visible abnormalities such as lesions or skin whitening
- Vulval pain during sexual intercourse
- Bleeding
- Itching / Burning
- Splitting of skin at the vulva
- a change in colour or texture to the labial area.

What is a vulval biopsy?

A vulval biopsy is usually performed if you have noticed itching, redness, swelling or changes in colour to this area. The biopsy is undertaken to remove cells from the vulva for testing.

What does the procedure involve?

Before the procedure is undertaken, the specialist will explain what is going to happen. One or more small pieces of tissue are removed from the vulval area. This is sent to the laboratory to be examined.

The procedure takes about 20 – 30 minutes and is done under local anaesthetic.

Can there be any complications or risks?

As with all procedures there can be complications. These may include bleeding and infection. You are advised to keep the area clean and dry. If you have any problems, please see your doctor.

Will it be painful?

You will be given a local anaesthetic prior to the procedure. We advise that when you are back at home, if you experience any discomfort following the procedure, you may take normal pain relief medication.

What happens when I get home?

It is advised that you rest for a couple of days and refrain from work, exercise and sitting in a warm bath for a few days. Please dab gently whilst trying to dry the vulval region.

You may experience some bleeding or discharge for up to a week. If you start to bleed heavily or find that the discharge is very smelly, please contact your specialist.

Changing your sanitary pads regularly will help to prevent infection. The use of bubble baths and intercourse should be avoided until the area is completely healed. This may take up to 2 – 4 weeks depending on the exact area of biopsy and other contributory medical conditions.

What if I have further questions?

If you have any other questions, please contact:

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