

Additional Notes

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Loop Excision Treatment

Large Loop Excision of Transformation Zone (LLETZ)

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital,
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Patient information

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What is a loop excision of the cervix (LLETZ for short)?

LLETZ loop excision is one of the most common and effective treatments for removing moderate or severe changes (CIN2 or CIN3) on the cervix. These changes were explained in more detail in the information leaflet you will have received 'NHS cervical screening: having a colposcopy'.

A specially heated thin wire loop removes the abnormal tissue and seals at the same time. This causes as little damage as possible to the surrounding healthy tissue. The removed tissue will then be sent for analysis to make sure all of the abnormal cells have been removed. If you choose not to have the treatment, your smear abnormalities are likely to persist. The abnormal cells on the cervix may develop into cancer in the future and more extensive treatment may then be needed.

Why do I need treatment?

A LLETZ treatment has been recommended to remove the abnormal cells in order for your smears to return to normal and prevent cancer in the future. Treatment can still go ahead if you are on the last day or two of your period, or if your period is very light. Please note that due to the type of treatment you are having, a pregnancy test may be required and if you are pregnant, we may postpone your treatment. If this is the case, we will discuss the options with you.

We will be unable to proceed with the LLETZ treatment if:

- you have unprotected sexual intercourse since the start of your last normal (natural) period because we would be unable to rule out that you are pregnant. Please use a reliable method of contraception for every episode of intercourse.

Contact

Harbourside Gynaecology Centre

Main reception: **0300 019 2584**

Unit secretary: **0300 019 3107**

Colposcopy Department

0300 019 4672

You can leave a message on the answer phone and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

If you are worried about your symptoms out of office hours, please contact your GP or NHS **111**

For further information on cervical screening and colposcopy:

www.gov.uk

MacMillan Cancer Support:

www.macmillan.org.uk Support Line: **0808 808 00 00**

Eve Appeal:

eveappeal.org.uk Ask Eve Helpline: **0808 80 2 0019**

Results

You will be notified of your results in writing in approximately three weeks.

Due to confidentiality results cannot be given out over the telephone.

If you need to cancel your appointment

If you are unable to keep this appointment please let us know as soon as possible so that we can offer this appointment to another patient.

You may need to take simple pain relief and as with all surgical procedures, however small, the more you look after yourself in the first few days, the quicker you will recover in the long term. Most women will experience some bleeding; this ranges from a small amount of spotting to a light period. This will become a watery blood stained discharge which may last from two to six weeks after treatment.

- Your next period may be a little heavier or longer than usual. This will soon return to normal.
- We recommend that you do not use tampons for four weeks to reduce the risk of infection.
- If you are taking the contraceptive pill it is safe for you to continue with the next packet without a break following this treatment to avoid a bleed at this time.
- Sexual intercourse is not advised for four weeks after treatment.
- Shower for the first few days rather than having a bath, if possible.
- Swimming should be avoided for two weeks. Light exercise may continue but aerobic activity should be avoided for one week.
- We advise that you try to avoid foreign travel the following two weeks after your treatment however If you do need to travel, check with your travel insurance company as any complications arising from your treatment may not be covered by insurance.
- You may need to have a couple of days off work if it involves heavy lifting and you should discuss this with the colposcopist or nurse, but normal daily activities including light exercise may continue.

What are the risks to me if I have a LLETZ?

This procedure is considered to be a safe and effective treatment, however all medical procedures carry some risk. The doctor or nurse will discuss these with you.

Common

- It is usual to have a little bleeding immediately after your treatment. You may also notice that you have a little fresh red blood loss lasting for 7-10 days after your treatment, as long as this is not heavy this is nothing to worry about.
- You will have a vaginal discharge lasting between two and six weeks after treatment.

Occasional

If you experience the following, **please see your GP or out of hours contact NHS 111**

- Heavy bleeding with clots, which may happen immediately after treatment or 7-10 days later.
- Infection which may result in prolonged heavy or smelly discharge, pain or soreness in the vagina. (You may need antibiotics).

Rare

- The risk of preterm birth in a future pregnancy is related to the amount of tissue removed at the time of treatment. If the depth of the LLETZ is <10mm then it will have no impact on increasing the risk of preterm delivery and you can be treated as normal in a future pregnancy. If the depth is >10mm then the risk is slightly increased and you will be offered a scan of your cervix in a future pregnancy. You will be informed of the depth of treatment with your results letter.

- Changes in the cervical canal can occur as a result of treatment. These include cervical stenosis, where the opening of the cervix closes over. This can occasionally cause problems for the doctor or nurse taking future smears or when examining the cervix.

Are there any alternatives to this treatment?

LLETZ is considered to be the most effective and successful treatment method for moderate and severe changes to the cervix. Only 1% of patients need a repeat treatment. For more minor changes in younger women we offer a treatment called cold coagulation which will be discussed with you.

I have a coil (intrauterine contraceptive device - IUCD) in my womb - will that need to be removed?

If you have an IUCD in place it may be removed just before starting the LLETZ procedure therefore, **please avoid sexual intercourse for one week before your treatment or use another form of contraception.** You may then need to arrange to have your coil replaced by your GP six weeks after your treatment or during your next period. Extra contraceptive precautions should be used until your coil is re-inserted.

- you have body piercings anywhere in the vulval or pubic area - these must be removed before attending your appointment as they could get hot during the treatment causing a burn.

It is usual to have been seen in the colposcopy clinic before your treatment to confirm the diagnosis by having a small piece of tissue (biopsy) taken. The LLETZ treatment is normally carried out in the colposcopy clinic under a local anaesthetic but occasionally a general anaesthetic is required if there is a large area that requires treatment and/or previous treatment under local anaesthetic was difficult or uncomfortable.

What will happen if I need a general anaesthetic?

You will be sent a further appointment for the LLETZ to be done in the Day Surgery Unit as a day case, meaning you should be able to go home the same day, but sometimes an overnight stay may be required. You will have a chance to see the Anaesthetist and Doctor prior to the procedure. The procedure time will vary according to the area that requires treatment.

What do I need to do when I go home after the procedure?

It is advisable to go home and rest immediately after the procedure. After a local anaesthetic, to ensure you are well enough to go home, we request that you remain in the department for 10 to 15 minutes. After a general anaesthetic when you are discharged home, you will need to arrange for someone to drive you home and if you live alone and are discharged on the same day of the procedure, you will need to arrange for an adult to stay with you in your residence overnight.