

Colposcopy

What is colposcopy?

An examination of the cervix and/or the vagina with a magnifying device called a colposcope. A colposcope can enlarge the view by two to 60 times. The exam is not painful, although it may be uncomfortable. The procedure time takes between 5-10 minutes.

Reasons for colposcopy

Colposcopy should be done if a woman:

- Has an abnormal pap smear
- Genital warts on the cervix, vagina, or vulva
- Benign (not cancer) growths, such as polyps
- Pain or bleeding

The most common reason for colposcopy is a pap smear showing dysplasia (abnormal cells). These abnormal cells may be precancerous.

Colposcopy Procedure

After the patient is placed in the stirrups, the speculum is placed. The cervix is cleansed with a vinegar solution. The physician will then collect some cells from the inside of the cervix, similar to a pap smear. After the physician looks with the colposcope, he or she may decide to take some biopsies. Numbing medication is applied to the cervix. The biopsy involves removing very small pieces of tissue with an instrument. The biopsies may cause some cramping and spotting. Monsel's solution may be applied to the biopsy site to stop the bleeding.

After the colposcopy

You may experience some cramping and spotting for a day or two. If Monsel's solution is used on the biopsy sites, you may have a brownish vaginal discharge for 1-2 days. Do not use tampons for a couple of days to prevent infection. You may resume sexual intercourse after the bleeding stops. The biopsies are sent to the pathology department to be studied. When the biopsy results come back from the lab, they may take 7-10 days, your physician's office will contact you with the results and recommendations.

LEEP

Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure

What is a LEEP?

LEEP (Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure) is an effective and simple way to remove abnormal cells (dysplasia) from the cervix. A thin wire loop that acts like a scalpel is used to precisely cut out the abnormal cells. In most cases, a LEEP is done in the office. The procedure only takes a few minutes to do.

The LEEP Procedure

During the procedure you will lie on your back and place your feet in the stirrups. After the speculum is placed, anesthesia will be injected into the cervix to numb the area. A solution is applied onto the cervix to show the abnormal cells that needs to be removed. The doctor will insert a thin wire loop into the vagina to the cervix. There are several different sizes and shapes of loops that can be used. You will hear a vacuum – like sound when the machine is on. The thin wire loop is like a surgical knife and the abnormal tissue is then removed. You may experience some cramping during the procedure, but no sharp pain.

After the procedure

You may have some vaginal bleeding, mild cramping, and a brownish-black discharge. It will take a few weeks for the cervix to heal. During this time, we recommend that you do not use tampons or douching. Refrain from sexual intercourse for 4 weeks. Your first period after the LEEP may be heavier than usual. A shower is preferred to a tub bath for 2 weeks or until discharge-bleeding has stopped. The specimens are sent to the pathology department to be evaluated. The results may take 7-10 days. Your physician's office will contact you with results and recommendations. A follow up appointment will be made for four weeks following your LEEP to examine the cervix.

Risks

The most common risk in the first couple weeks after a LEEP is heavy bleeding. If you have heavy bleeding or bleeding with clots, contact your doctor. If you have severe

abdominal pain, fever, or foul smelling discharge please notify your physician. LEEP has been associated with an increased risk of future pregnancy problems. Although most women have no problems, there is a small increase in the risk of premature births.

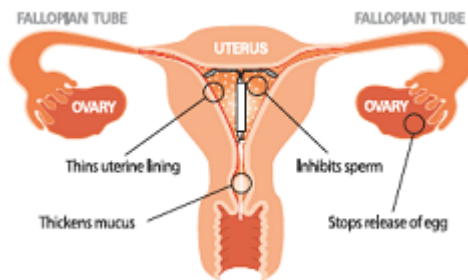
IUD Intrauterine Device

The intrauterine device is a type of birth control. It is a small, plastic device that is inserted and left inside of the uterus. The two most common types of IUDs are the hormonal IUD (Mirena) or the copper IUD (Paragard). The Mirena IUD must be replaced every 5 years. The copper IUD can remain in the body for as long as 10 years.

At Northwest Iowa Surgeons we use the Mirena IUD.

How an IUD works

Both IUDs are T-shaped, but they work in different ways. The Mirena IUD releases a small amount of hormone progestin into the uterus. This thickens the cervical mucus, which decreases the chance that the sperm will enter the cervix. It also thins the lining of the uterus. This keeps a fertilized egg from attaching and makes menstrual flow lighter. However, an IUD does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).



Inserting the IUD

A physician must insert and remove the IUD. The doctor will perform a routine exam to make sure you are able to use one. This exam will include reviewing your medical history, a pregnancy test, and checking to see if the uterus is large enough to accommodate the IUD. Insertion of the IUD does not require anesthesia, although you may have some discomfort. A thin tube of flexible plastic containing the IUD is passed

into the vagina and then into your cervix. Once the IUD is positioned correctly, the plastic inserter is withdrawn, leaving the IUD in your uterus. The two threads attached to the stem of the IUD are trimmed to the appropriate length.

Some women may experience cramping or pain, bleeding, and/or dizziness during and right after the IUD placement. To minimize the cramping, your provider may give you some pain medications prior to your appointment.

How can I be sure the IUD is properly in place?

Once the IUD is placed, you should check the threads once a month to make sure it is still positioned correctly. Your provider can show you how. If you have trouble finding the threads, call your physician. In the meantime, be sure to use a backup form of birth control.

Benefits

- It is easy to use. Once it is in place, you do not have to do anything else to prevent pregnancy.
- It does not interfere with sex or daily activities.
- You can use a tampon with it.
- Physical activity will not dislodge the IUD.
- Typically, a woman's menstrual flow will become lighter.
- No daily maintenance or routine.
- 99% effective

Side Effects

Menstrual pain and bleeding, as well as bleeding between periods, are increased with the copper IUD, but decreased with the hormonal IUD. Some women have some cramping and spotting during the first few weeks after the IUD is inserted. Vaginal discharge also can occur. These symptoms are common and usually disappear within a month or two.

The IUD offers safe, effective, and reversible protection against pregnancy for many women. Weighing the benefits and risks of using an IUD and knowing your medical and sexual history will help you and your doctor decide whether this method of birth control is right for you.

For more information about Mirena, visit their website at www.mirena-us.com