

# Having a Loop Diathermy Treatment

## Families Division

### Patient Information Leaflet



### Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this leaflet then please call:

**01253 955588**

Our Four Values:

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## **What is a loop diathermy?**

A loop diathermy is used to treat women with an abnormality on their cervix (neck of the womb). It involves taking a biopsy of the cervix to remove the abnormal cells. This procedure is also known as a large loop excision of the transformation zone (LLETZ).

The procedure is usually performed under local anaesthetic (where a medication is used to 'numb' the neck of the womb). However, in some cases the procedure is performed under general anaesthetic (asleep for the entire procedure). This would be discussed with you following your colposcopy (detailed examination of your cervix).

## **Why should I have a loop diathermy?**

The procedure is being performed to remove the area of abnormal pre-cancerous cells which have been identified on your cervix during your colposcopy examination. In the vast majority of cases, the treatment is successful and no further treatments are necessary.

## **What is the benefit of loop diathermy?**

It is important to remember that the treatment to your cervix is being performed to help prevent possible cervical cancer from developing in the future.

## **What are the risks?**

### **Bleeding:**

It is normal to have some light bleeding and discharge for up to four weeks following the treatment to your cervix. Initially you should expect to have a mucky-looking discharge (brown from the iodine used) with a few spots of blood. This may then become a very watery discharge. It is not expected for you to have heavy bleeding. If you have any concerns, please ring the contact number on the back of this leaflet or telephone 111.

### **Infection:**

If you have a vaginal discharge which has an offensive (bad) smell, it may indicate that you have an infection. Please go to your GP who may prescribe you antibiotics.

### **Premature Delivery:**

The treatment should not affect your ability to become pregnant. The most recent evidence is that one treatment would not increase the risk of preterm labour, however, several treatments may weaken the cervix and may slightly increase the risk of preterm labour. Therefore, if you get pregnant following this treatment, we advise you to inform your GP and midwife that you have had treatment to your cervix.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **How can I prepare for the loop diathermy?**

Carry on as normal before the procedure. It is important that you eat and drink before the procedure.

You may like to bring someone with you so that they can take you home after the procedure, but it is not essential.

### **Will I feel any pain?**

A local anaesthetic is given before the treatment so you should not feel any pain during the procedure, although you are likely to feel some pressure on your cervix. You may feel some discomfort after the treatment. You may experience a mild periodlike pain - if this occurs we advise that you take your normal pain relieving medication.

If having a General Anaesthetic (GA), the procedure would be scheduled within four weeks. A letter will be sent to you confirming a date. You will also be advised of pre-procedure preparation for GA.

### **What if I am pregnant?**

It is not possible to undertake treatment on your cervix if you are pregnant. In order to ensure that you are not pregnant on the day of your surgery, a pregnancy test will be performed by testing a sample of urine.

### **I have a coil fitted, what happens now?**

If you have a coil (IUCD) or Mirena (IUS) fitted, the clinician may take it out at the time of your treatment. You should not have sexual intercourse for seven days before your planned procedure. Following the procedure, avoid sexual intercourse for up to four weeks until the area is fully healed.

### **I'm going on holiday, what should I do?**

If you are planning on going abroad and have been sent an appointment for treatment, please call us to let us know. We would normally suggest that you do not travel abroad for at least two weeks following the treatment. This is because of the risk of bleeding or other complications, such as infection.

### **What happens after the loop diathermy?**

You will be asked to stay in the department until you feel well recovered after the procedure. During this time a nurse will check on you and will go through the aftercare advice leaflet and answer any questions you may have.

### **Will I have a follow-up appointment?**

It is very important that you have your first cervical cytology test (smear test) six months after your treatment. We will confirm if this will take place in the colposcopy clinic or your GP surgery when we write to advise you of the results of your loop diathermy treatment. If you have any queries, please contact the colposcopy team, numbers for which are on the back page of this leaflet.

## Useful contact details

**Any queries contact:**

**Colposcopy secretary:**

01253 955534 or 01253 953488

**Colposcopy Nurses:** 01253 953995

Mon-Thurs 9:30am-4pm; Fri 9:30am-12pm

Hospital Switchboard: **01253 300000**

## Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives. You can contact them via:

Tel: **01253 955589**

email: **patient.relations@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at:

**Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR**

Further information is available on our website:

**www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

## References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from:

**Policy Co-ordinator/Archivist 01253 953397**