

Patient information

Gynaecology Rapid Access Clinics

You have been referred to one of our rapid access gynaecology clinics for us to rule out cancer as a cause of your symptoms.

This includes the Colposcopy Clinic, the Gynaecological Diagnostic Clinic (GDC) or the Post Menopausal Bleeding Clinic (PMB). The reason for seeing women on a rapid access pathway includes the following:

- bleeding after the menopause/unscheduled bleeding on HRT
- post coital bleeding (PCB) - bleeding after sexual intercourse
- a clinical abnormality of your cervix, vulva or vagina has been noted, which requires further investigation
- a pelvic abnormality i.e. an ovarian cyst which requires further investigation.

The rapid access clinics can be very busy. We aim to undertake investigations within two weeks from your GP referral. After a scan you will be given either an appointment in clinic or a telephone consult with one of the specialists in the team. If you have a vulval / vaginal lesion or your GP is concerned over the appearance of your cervix, you will not require a scan and will be made a clinic appointment directly.

What can I expect to happen at my appointment?

This will depend on the reason for your referral but may include some of the following investigations:

- **Consultation:** This is with the consultant or a doctor in their team. This may include an internal examination, a cervical smear or biopsy if appropriate.
- **Ultrasound scan:** This investigation is used to provide images of the uterus

and the ovaries. It may be carried out on the abdomen with a full bladder or using a vaginal probe (internal scan). Depending on the scan results you will have either a face-to-face clinic or telephone consultation.

- **Endometrial biopsy:** A biopsy to remove a sample of the endometrium (lining of the womb). This involves an internal examination and although it only takes a few minutes, it can be uncomfortable – you may experience crampy period type pains. You may wish to take paracetamol 1g and ibuprofen 400mg (assuming that you are not allergic or have any other contraindications (medical reasons) to taking this medication) one hour before your appointment to help with any discomfort you may experience during the procedure).
- **Cervical biopsy:** A small piece of tissue is taken from your cervix. Local anaesthetic is not usually needed. The procedure generally causes little discomfort.
- **Vulval biopsy:** A small piece of tissue is taken under local anaesthetic. The procedure generally causes little discomfort.
- **Blood tests:** If an ovarian cyst is found on ultrasound, a blood test called CA125 is recommended to help distinguish between a benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous) cyst. Other blood tests may also be requested.

General advice

- You may bring a friend/relative with you for company and support.
- If a biopsy is needed, an experienced nurse will assist the doctor and provide you with support and reassurance.
- You may experience some bleeding after a biopsy. Sanitary towels are provided, or you may prefer to bring your own.
- Following a biopsy, we would recommend you arrange to have the rest of the day off work.

If you have any further queries or questions, please contact:

Gynaecology nurse specialist: Monday to Friday, 8.30am – 5pm on 01284 713154. There is an answer phone available.

Further information on ultrasound scan and cervical/endometrial/vulval biopsies can be found on the West Suffolk Hospital website: www.wsh.nhs.uk - follow the

quick link to patient information leaflets.

If you do not have access to a computer and would like one of these leaflets, please phone the nurses office on the number above and we will send a copy by post.

Other useful links:

- www.bsccp.org.uk
- www.macmillan.org.uk

Clinical research

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email info.gov@wsh.nhs.uk. This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)
<https://www.accessable.co.uk>

