

Before having a LEEP, you need to know the possible benefits, risks and alternatives. We have listed them here for you. We are happy to answer any questions you have.

What is LEEP?

LEEP is the abbreviation for loop electrosurgical excision procedure. It is a treatment for abnormal cells on the cervix. A small electrical wire loop is used to remove the area of the cervix where there are abnormal cells.

How is LEEP done?

LEEP can be done in a clinic or doctor's office. The patient lies in the same position used for having a Pap test. A speculum is inserted to view the cervix and vagina with a colposcope. Numbing medication is applied or injected into the cervix. The clinician inserts a small instrument with an electrical wire loop into the vagina. The clinician uses the wire to quickly remove a small area of cervical tissue. The procedure takes about 10 minutes.

The tissue is sent to a lab to be examined under a microscope for diagnosis. The findings are sent to Vermont Gynecology. We will notify you about the results.

What does LEEP feel like?

The woman does not feel cutting or heat from the loop. Some women experience mild discomfort or cramping. Most don't feel anything.

Benefits

LEEP is an effective treatment for abnormal cervical cells. Treatment with LEEP can remove abnormal cells that are deep in the cervical canal. Because a tissue sample is taken during the treatment, your clinician will get added information from the lab about the abnormal tissue. This will aid in planning follow-up care.

Risks

Most women do not experience serious problems from LEEP. Very rarely, however, serious problems occur. These include:

- Damage to other pelvic organs or the vaginal walls
- Pelvic infection that needs treatment — This is more of a risk if you have sex before the cervix heals.
- Heavy bleeding that may require a return visit to the office — This happens in about one out of 100 cases.
- Reaction to local anesthetic

In a small number of cases, LEEP does not completely cure the problem. It may have to be repeated later, or another treatment may be needed. Vermont Gynecology cannot guarantee the success of the treatment. The risk that this treatment will fail to cure the problem is about 5–10 percent. If not cured, the abnormal cells could progress to a more serious condition or to cervical cancer. That's why it is very important for you to keep all of your appointments for follow-up exams and tests. If you are given referrals for further diagnosis or treatment, the responsibility for obtaining and paying for that care is yours.

Alternatives

In some cases the problem can be cured with laser or cryotherapy (freezing of the tissue). But this is not possible in all cases. Also, cryotherapy does not provide tissue samples for lab diagnosis. In some cases the problem can be treated with surgery or laser in an operating room. Your clinician can discuss what is the best plan in your case. It is always an option to decline testing or treatment

After the Procedure

After treatment, you may experience mild cramping for up to 24 hours. You probably will have a watery vaginal discharge for several weeks. This discharge may be heavy for a few days or may be mixed with a little blood and some brown, coffee-ground type material. The discharge may have an odor. If this happens, wash the labia (lips) off with plain water several times a day for a few days.

To speed healing and prevent infection, follow these instructions:

1. If needed, use sanitary pads, not tampons, for *four weeks*.
2. Don't have vaginal sex or put anything inside the vagina for *four weeks*.
3. Don't douche for at least *four weeks*. (We do not recommend douching at all.)
4. Use oral pain relievers, such as Advil® (Ibuprofen) 600 mg every 6-8 hours as needed, or Tylenol® 1000 mg every 6-8 hours, for cramps.

Warning Signs — Call the office if you have any questions or any unusual or unexpected symptoms, such as

- Unusual vaginal bleeding, or bleeding heavier than the heaviest day of your period
- Foul smelling vaginal discharge
- Fever (temperature of 100.4° or higher), chills, or abdominal pain

It is very important to have follow-up care. More frequent visits to your provider will be needed for a while. Be sure you understand your instructions and your schedule of follow-up exams and tests.

Vermont Gynecology
Daytime phone number 802-735-1252

AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER 1-802-350-1260

Patient Signature _____

Date _____

I witness that the patient received this information, said she read and understood it, and had an opportunity to ask questions.

Witness Signature _____

Date _____