

Investigating your bleeding after sex

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Information for Patients

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Bleeding after sex

When you have vaginal bleeding during or straight after sex, this is called post-coital bleeding (PCB). This bleeding is not related to your period.

What causes PCB?

Here are some of the common reasons for PCB:

- Infections in your vagina.
- Polyps are skin tag like growths inside the womb or on the neck of the womb (cervix). These are often non-cancerous. But 1 in 6 are precancerous or 1 in 30 cancerous.
- Dryness and thinning of the skin inside the vagina called atrophy. This is common in women after the menopause and during breastfeeding.
- Damage because of friction or splitting of the skin of the vulva or vagina. This is common in women after the menopause or with some skin conditions.
- Cervical ectropion is when the delicate lining of the inside of the cervix is seen on the outside surface of the cervix. This is harmless.
- Precancerous or cancerous changes on the cervix.
- Vaginal cancer but this is rare there are around 250 new cases a year in the UK.
- Caesarean section scar niche: this is where there is a little bulge out where you had a caesarean section. On the inside of the womb there can be trapped period blood from your period. Later in the month this blood can come out with sex or exercise. It is not dangerous at all.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

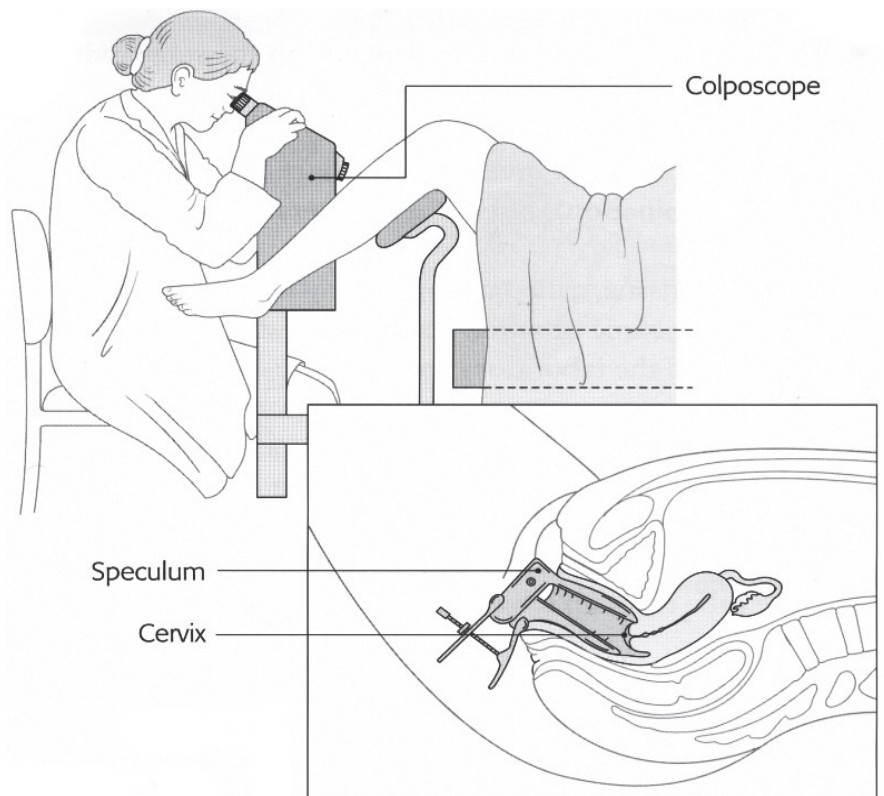
What will happen when I attend my appointment?

We will ask you some personal questions about your intimate health. We do this so we can find the cause for the bleeding. We will need to know:

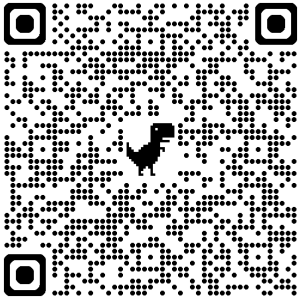
- the date your last period started
- what you use for birth control (your contraception method), unless you are trying for a baby
- when you last had a smear test and if you have had abnormal smears before
- if you have ever had any sexually transmitted infections
- any health problems or any operations you have had
- any medications you are taking
- any allergies you have

What happens next?

1. We will take you to a private area to undress from the waist down.
2. We will give you a hospital gown to wear.
3. We will ask you to lie on a special couch. This couch has supports for your legs.
4. The doctor or specialist nurse will insert the same instrument used during a smear test. This is called a speculum.
5. The doctor or specialist nurse may take a smear test, swabs or a biopsy from the neck of the womb.
6. They may also take a small sample of tissue inside your womb.
7. The doctor or specialist nurse can use a special microscope called a colposcope. This helps to take a closer look at your cervix and the neck of your womb. This does not go inside your vagina.
8. The doctor or specialist nurse can arrange more tests after this appointment. This can be for an ultrasound scan or a camera examination called hysteroscopy. This looks at the inside of your womb.



More information about [hysteroscopy](#) can be found by using the links or scanning the QR code.
Search leaflet 311 at <https://yourhealth.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/>



What treatment can I be offered?

We will offer some treatment if you have a cervical ectropion. This can help with the symptoms. This treatment is called Silver Nitrate Cautery. We put this chemical on the ectropion to make the cells strong. This changes the cells from being delicate to smooth and strong. This should improve your symptoms. This treatment does not usually hurt and takes only a few minutes to do. After the treatment you will have a brown discharge for a few days.

How do I get my results and how long will this take?

We will write to you and your GP about any results we have. We will try to send the results within 3 to 4 weeks. We will send you a follow up appointment. We will also send information on any more treatment or tests that you may need.

If you have an infection we will ask you to collect a prescription of antibiotics from your GP.

Is there anything to look out for when I go home?

This will depend on the treatment or investigations you have carried out on that day. If you have a cervical biopsy, a separate leaflet will be given to you.

How do I reduce the risk of infection after treatment?

To reduce the risk of infections, we recommend for the next 2 weeks you:

- do not have sex,
- do not swim
- do not use tampons or a moon cup

