

Colposcopy

You have received an appointment for a colposcopy, which is a follow-up procedure performed when abnormal cell changes have been found in the vulvar, vaginal or cervical area. The procedure is performed if:

- The smear test (Pap test) has strong or recurring mild findings, or the high-risk human papillomavirus (HPV) test is recurrently positive.
- There are abnormalities in the outer genitalia, vagina or the outer orifice of the cervix that are visible to the naked eye.
- There are asymptomatic, persistent sores in the outer genitalia.

Preparing for the procedure

The procedure **is not performed during menstrual bleeding** because the presence of blood obscures the visibility of the abnormalities. If you are on your period during your procedure appointment, contact the outpatient clinic **to reschedule your procedure appointment**.

Procedure

A gynecologist will examine the site of possible abnormality using a colposcope (microscope). During the procedure, a mild vinegar solution is used on the vulvar and vaginal area to make the possible abnormalities visible. Biopsies are taken from the area with abnormalities. If necessary, iodine solution is used. However, iodine solution is **not used on patients with an iodine allergy**.

Taking a biopsy from the vagina or the external orifice of the cervix causes only mild sensation, which is why they can be taken without anesthesia. Localized anesthesia is used before vulvar biopsy.

It is normal to experience tingling or burning sensation after the procedure, this is caused by the vinegar solution. Iodine solution stains healthy tissue brown. You will receive more detailed home care instructions during your outpatient clinic appointment.

Follow up

The biopsy results will be ready in about 3 weeks. The results can give confirmation on the stage of the possible abnormality, and further treatment and follow up plan is created based on the severity of the possible precancerous finding. You will receive your results as previously

agreed with your care provider. Usually patients read their follow-up plan from their OmaKanta-pages.

For more information visit the Gynaecological health and Cervical cell abnormalities (Pap test) pages at www.terveyskyla.fi/naistalo.fi (only available in Finnish and Swedish).