Biopsy of the vulva or vagina
Gynaecology Outpatient Department

Information for women

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

You have had a biopsy (small sample of tissue) taken from your vulva (entrance to your vagina) or vagina, which has been sent to a laboratory for further examination. (See below for diagrams showing areas where your biopsy has been taken from).

This leaflet tells you what to expect after your procedure and who to contact if you have any worries or concerns when you go home.

Diagram to show area where your biopsy has been taken

How will I feel when I go home?

You may have some discomfort or soreness for 1 - 7 days after this procedure. Taking painkillers, for example, paracetamol or ibuprofen can help. You should always follow the instructions provided in the leaflet supplied with your tablets.
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You may also pass small traces of blood (spotting) from your vulva or vagina for up to 7 days after this procedure. If you still have periods your next one should arrive as normal.

If:

- you have any heavy bleeding
- you have any discharge with an unpleasant smell from your vulva or vagina
- you feel feverish, unwell or develop a temperature higher than 38°C (100.4°F)
- your pain increases

you should contact your GP or the Outpatient Department where you had your procedure for further advice.

If you have an urgent problem the night after your procedure you can contact your local Accident and Emergency Department for advice. (See contact numbers at the end of this leaflet).

What can I do to help myself?

You should not have sexual intercourse or use tampons for the next 2 weeks to give your biopsy site time to heal.

It is important to keep the area clean and dry to help the healing process. After washing please make sure the area is completely dry by using a soft clean towel.

You should not add any products to your bath water for example, bath foam or oils as these can cause irritation and delay the healing process.

When can I return to my normal activities and work?

You can usually return to all your normal activities and work straight away or as soon as you feel well enough. You should discuss this with your nurse or doctor.

Will I need to return to hospital?

Your nurse will tell you if you need to be seen again in the Outpatient Department.

They will either:

- ask you to make another appointment before you go home
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or

• arrange for an appointment to be sent to you though the post.

If you have any worries or concerns please contact your GP or the Outpatient Department.

When will I be told the results of my biopsy?

Your biopsy will be sent to the laboratory. It can take up to 4 weeks to get the results of these tests. Your nurse will tell you how you will receive your results.

This will be either:

• in a letter sent to you through the post
or
• discussed with you during your next outpatient appointment.

Your GP will also be sent a letter explaining the results of your biopsy.

Contact numbers

If you need further advice please telephone the Outpatient Department at the hospital where you had your biopsy.

University Hospital of North Tees

Outpatient Department
telephone: 01642 624172
Monday – Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Accident and Emergency Department
telephone: 01642 382899
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

University Hospital of Hartlepool

Outpatient Department
telephone: 01429 522868
Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm

If you have any worries or concerns you should contact your GP during normal surgery hours. Outside surgery hours, you should contact your GP’s surgery for the Out of Hours Service number.
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Further information is available from:

NHS Choices
telephone: 111 (when it is less urgent than 999)
Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones
or via the website at www.nhs.uk

Notes:

Please use this space to make a note of any questions you may wish to ask.
This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we’re doing well or if there’s anything which we can improve, that’s why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

    telephone: 01642 624719
    Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
    Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

    freephone: 0800 092 0084
    Mobile: (can use text): 0779 506 1883
    Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

    telephone: 01642 617617
    24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

    telephone: 01642 833551 or email: information.governance@nth.nhs.uk