

LEEP (Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure)

LEEP

Your health care provider wants you to have a LEEP (loop electrosurgical excision procedure) because you had an abnormal Pap test and colposcopy.

A LEEP is the surgical removal of abnormal cells on the cervix using electric current passed through a thin wire loop. It is done to prevent cervical cancer.

This procedure has some risks such as heavy bleeding, infection and possible preterm labor related to future pregnancies. It is important to talk about all the benefits and risks with your health care provider before having this procedure.

This procedure takes about 10 to 15 minutes. You can resume most regular activities right away.

Before the Procedure

- This procedure should be done about 1 week after your last menstrual period. It can be done anytime if you are using birth control.
- Do not douche or have sexual intercourse for 48 hours before your procedure.
- To help reduce cramping during the procedure, start taking 800 milligrams (mg) of ibuprofen (such as Advil®) every 6 hours the night before your surgery.
- Tell your health care provider if you have an allergy to local anesthesia, shellfish or iodine.

During the Procedure

- You will be asked to undress from the waist down. You will lie on your back on the exam table. Your buttocks will be at the edge of the table and your feet will be placed in foot rests. You will have a sheet draped over your hips.
- Your health care provider will gently insert a speculum into your vagina.
- A colposcope (a lighted, magnifying instrument) will be used to look at your vagina and cervix.
- Your cervix will be washed with a mild antiseptic.
- A local anesthesia will be used to numb the cervical area to prevent pain.
- When you are given the local anesthesia, you may feel a slight sting and maybe a dull ache or cramp.
- An electric current is passed through a wire loop which cuts away a thin layer of the cervix. There are different sizes and shapes of the wire loops that can be used.
- A paste like solution may be put on the cervix to help stop any bleeding.

After the Procedure

- Do not douche, have sexual intercourse or use tampons for 2 weeks.
- Do not place anything in the vagina for 2 weeks.

(over)

- Do not do any strenuous exercise for 2 weeks.
- It is normal to have some brownish-black vaginal discharge for the first week after the procedure.
- You may have mild cramping.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have any of these symptoms:

- a temperature of 100.5 F or higher
- vaginal bleeding that lasts more than 1 week
- heavy vaginal bleeding (soaking 1 pad an hour for more than 3 hours in a row)
- foul-smelling vaginal odor or discharge.
- severe abdominal pain

If you have any questions or concerns either before or after your procedure, please call the clinic where your LEEP is scheduled.

LEEP Results

The results of your procedure will show how much the cells changed (this is called dysplasia).

Dysplasia happens when normal cells in the cervix become abnormal, but are not cancer. There are 3 levels of dysplasia, based on how abnormal the cells appear:

- mild
- moderate
- severe.

Your health care provider will talk with you about your results. He or she will also work with you to create a follow-up plan that is right for you.

Follow-up Pap Tests

After a LEEP, you will need to have more Pap tests. Your health care provider will tell you when to come in for a follow-up appointment.