

Colposcopy

A Colposcopy is a medical procedure employed to evaluate the cervix after an abnormal Pap smear or a positive high-risk HPV test. The colposcope is a microscope through which a magnified view of the cervix may be seen under a bright light. This exam can identify abnormalities of the appearance of the cervix in an attempt to correlate them with the abnormalities identified by the Pap smear. When a suspicious area is identified, a small biopsy can be taken. An additional specimen may also be obtained by gently scraping the lower cervical canal to assure that there are no hidden abnormal cells.

After the specimens have been taken, Monsel's solution is applied on the cervix to prevent or stop bleeding. After application of Monsel's solution, a discharge resembling coffee grounds may result, and may continue for several days.

Most women experience some degree of discomfort with this procedure, often described as mild cramping. It may be helpful to take 2 - 3 tablets of 200 mg ibuprofen, Advil or Motrin, one hour before the procedure.

After the procedure, mild cramping may occur for a few hours. You may have a slight discharge, or even light spotting, for three to ten days. It is recommended that tampons, douching and intercourse are avoided until the discharge completely resolves.