



## Treatment following an abnormal cervical smear

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### Why do I need treatment?

Your results have shown that you have abnormal cells on your cervix (neck of your womb). These need to be treated to prevent cancer developing in the future.

### What do you mean by abnormal cells?

The name given to abnormal cells on the cervix is cervical intraepithelial neoplasia (CIN). Sometimes the abnormal cells are from a different part of the cervix and are known as cervical glandular intraepithelial neoplasia (CGIN). Both types are often called pre-cancerous cells.

### If they are pre-cancerous does that mean I'd get cancer?

Only about one out of three women would develop cancer in the future if the abnormal cells were not treated. At the moment it is

impossible to tell in which women the cells would develop, and so you should have treatment to prevent cancer.

### I've heard there are different types of CIN - what does that mean?

CIN is often divided into three types - CIN1, CIN2 and CIN3. In CIN1 there is only a very slight change in the cells and this type often goes back to normal on its own without any treatment. In CIN2 and CIN3 there are more marked changes which need treatment to prevent cancer in the future, as they are less likely to return to normal on their own.

### Are there different types of treatment?

Yes. The different treatments either destroy or remove the abnormal area.

### How do you choose which treatment is best for me?

The doctor at the colposcopy clinic will use the results of your smear, the way your cervix looks and the results of your biopsy to work out the most suitable treatment for you.

### What different types are available?

Laser treatment uses a beam of light to destroy abnormal cells. Loop biopsy (sometimes known as DLB or LLETZ)

removes abnormal cells using a small wire loop. Cold coagulation destroys abnormal cells using a probe placed on the cervix. A few women need a cone biopsy - this removes a small area of the cervix.

### Can you treat in me the outpatient clinic?

For most women who need treatment, this can be done in the outpatient clinic using a local anaesthetic. This is very much like your colposcopy visit and takes about 10 to 20 minutes.

### Does it hurt?

You will feel a stinging sensation for a few seconds when the local anaesthetic is applied to your cervix. The local anaesthetic acts very quickly and should stop you feeling any pain.

### What happens if I can't be treated in the outpatient clinic?

If the area to be treated is very large or if you need a cone biopsy, you will need a general anaesthetic (you will be asleep and will need to stay a short time in hospital). An appointment will be arranged.

### What about side effects?

You may have a bloodstained discharge following your treatment. It is better to avoid tampons for a short while and use towels instead. Some women may feel a period-like discomfort after the examination. If you notice any heavy bleeding, pain or discharge, then you will need to contact the clinic or your GP.

### What about my chances of getting pregnant if I have treatment?

Most of the treatments used nowadays have no effects on your chances of getting pregnant, on future pregnancies or on labour. If you have any concerns, please discuss these with the clinic staff.

### What about sex?

You should not have sex for a month following treatment. This allows the treated area to heal.

### I've found out I'm pregnant.

You will need to contact the clinic to let them know you are pregnant as treatment is usually postponed until after you have had your baby. You will probably need another colposcopy examination during your pregnancy.

### Will I need follow-up?

After treatment for abnormal cells you will need another two smear tests six months apart and yearly smear tests until you are returned to smears every three years.

### Does the treatment work?

Treatment is nearly always 100% successful. However, a small number of women treated may need more treatment. It is therefore very important to have regular follow-ups.

### More Information and Support

For more details about the records we keep, contact Cervical Screening Wales for a copy of our leaflet 'How we use information about you.'

If you wish to make a comment or complaint, you can contact Cervical Screening Wales for a copy of our leaflet 'Do you have any suggestions, comments or complaints about Cervical Screening Wales?'

Both these leaflets are available on our website: -

[www.screeningservices.org.uk/csw](http://www.screeningservices.org.uk/csw)

Cervical Screening Wales also produces a range of leaflets on various topics to do with cervical screening, which are available:

- By post from:  
The Director,  
Cervical Screening Wales  
18 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ
- On our website

If you have any questions about the service:

- Ask your doctor
- Contact your local health clinic
- Visit our website
- Visit NHS direct at [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk) or phone on 0845 4647