

Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP)

Patient Information Guide



The following information was compiled to help you understand the diathermic loop electrosurgical excision procedure, commonly called the LEEP method. If you have other questions, please feel free to discuss them with your physician or nurse.

What is the LEEP procedure?

- The LEEP procedure is used in cervical treatment for women whose PAP test or cervical biopsy produces abnormal results.
- Using a metallic electrosurgical electrode, the physician can excise and cauterize (use heat to destroy abnormal cells) the abnormal uterine tissue.
- The technique is relatively painless and non-invasive: it involves limited risk of damaging surrounding tissue since the procedure is precise and the loop used to deliver the heat is extremely thin. Hospitalization is not required.

The procedure

On the day of your appointment, 20 minutes ahead of time, come to the registration office 1D106. Bring your health card with you. The LEEP procedure can take place at any point in your menstrual cycle; however, if you experience heavy bleeding on the day of your exam, call the clinic to find out whether you should schedule another appointment. If you feel discomfort or abdominal cramps during the procedure, let the nurse or doctor know.

- Please remove your pants and panties and then cover yourself with a sheet.
- You will be placed in the gynecological position, i.e., with your feet in stirrups.
- The physician will insert a speculum in the same manner as for a PAP test.
- A local anesthetic is injected into the cervix.

During the injection, you might experience increased heart rate, ringing in your ears and muscle trembling in your legs. These symptoms are normal, and will last only a few minutes; stay calm and breathe deeply.

- A solution is applied to the cervix to make more visible the abnormal cells to be removed.
- The physician excises the abnormal tissue with a diathermic loop connected to an electrosurgical generator and a smoke exhaust. The procedure itself lasts 15 to 20 seconds. It is important that you remain still while the generator is on.

The generator is very loud, like a household vacuum cleaner.

- After removing the tissue, the doctor stops any visible bleeding.
- A brown paste is applied to the cervix and the speculum is removed.

This paste can cause a brownish-coloured vaginal discharge for several days.

After treatment

You could experience mild abdominal pain, brownish-coloured vaginal discharge and minor bleeding similar to menstruation.

Contact your family physician if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Continuous pelvic pain or cramps even after taking analgesics.
- A temperature over 38°C or 99.4 °F.
- Bad-smelling vaginal discharge.

Report to the emergency room if you experience reddish vaginal discharges with clots or if you have to change your sanitary pad every hour.

Instructions

- Refrain from sexual intercourse for 4 weeks following the procedure.
- Refrain from using tampons for 4 weeks following the procedure.
- Take regular-strength Advil or Tylenol as needed for pain relief.
- Do not use vaginal douches.

- Do not insert anything into the vagina without the doctor's approval.
- Do not lift objects heavier than 15 lbs or 7kg for about 2 weeks.
- Refrain from intense exercise for about 2 weeks.

Risks

Risks and complications are unlikely but could include:

- Heavy bleeding
- Severe abdominal cramps
- Fever
- Bad-smelling vaginal discharges
- Incomplete removal of abnormal tissue
- Reduction of cervix (cervical stenosis)
- Infection
- Accidental cuts or burns to normal tissue caused by patient movement during the procedure
- Premature labour

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions. **Have someone accompany you during your procedure.**



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