

Department of Sexual & Reproductive Health

What to expect from your visit to the Gynaecology Clinic – to be reviewed

Some simple tests / investigations may be undertaken during this appointment. These may/may not include: a blood test, swabs for testing for infection, an ultrasound of the uterus (womb) and ovaries, a cervical smear test or a sample from the lining of the uterus. These tests can usually be conducted even if you are experiencing vaginal bleeding.

These tests will only be performed if your doctor feels that these are necessary and if you are willing to have these performed. If there is not enough time at the appointment, or if you prefer, the tests can be rescheduled for another appointment.

If any of these tests are undertaken, then you will be advised of when and how you will receive the results by the doctor.

Ultrasound Scan

This is normally a transvaginal ultrasound scan as it allows a closer view of the uterus and ovaries than a scan performed on the abdomen (tummy). This requires an empty bladder. You will be asked to undress from the waist down and be positioned on the examination couch. The scan is performed using a specially designed small ultrasound probe which is covered with a protective sheath and lubricating gel and then gently inserted into the vagina. A transvaginal scan usually causes no pain, but some may experience a mild discomfort.

Sample of the lining of the uterus (endometrial biopsy)

This test involves taking a small tissue sample from the lining of the uterus (endometrium). A thin plastic straw is passed into the womb. As it is removed it sucks a little piece of the tissue (that would normally come away in a period). The sample is then sent to the laboratory for analysis. This test usually causes cramping discomfort and some light bleeding. In most cases the pain settles once the procedure is finished, others may require some simple pain killers.

Once you are dressed you can go home. You are able to go to work if you are feeling well and are also able to drive after the procedure.

It is not uncommon to experience some vaginal bleeding for 1-2 days after the biopsy and so wearing a sanitary towel may be necessary. You can continue with normal activities such as having a bath or shower, exercise and driving.

Insertion of Intra-Uterine Devices (IUDs or 'coils) /or the Mirena

It is possible that the doctor that you see might suggest insertion of a Mirena or an IUD at this visit. If this is something that you would like, then you would need to make sure that you are not at risk of pregnancy when you attend your appointment. It is not always possible to insert the Mirena or IUD at the same clinic visit, if there is not enough time or further tests are required before this can

be done. For more information on the Mirena or IUD visit our website and watch the short video on www.lothiansexualhealth.scot.nhs.uk

Chaperone

A clinical support worker is normally present to assist the doctor with any examination/procedure that they perform. They will also provide you with assistance for dressing/undressing if you need this.

Clinical research and clinical teaching

NHS Lothian is active in undertaking clinical research. It is possible that during your attendance you may be approached and be given information about taking part in a study. You do not have to take part in any research but may be offered the opportunity to do so. NHS Lothian is also active in training medical and nursing students. You may be approached and asked if you give permission for a trainee to be present during your consultation or during your procedure. It is your choice whether you agree to help with training or research. If you decide not to, this will not affect your ongoing care in our services in any way.