

If you have any queries, please contact the Colposcopy Clinic on 0207 288 5118.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a question, compliment, comment or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

Whittington Health
Magdala Avenue
London
N19 5NF
Phone: 020 7272 3070

Date published: 13/04/2017
Review date: 13/04/2019
Ref: WH/Colp/Cry/02

© **Whittington Health**
Please recycle

Cryocautery

A patient's guide



Cryocautery is an excellent method of treating cervical problems of an ectropion that is causing persistent vaginal discharge or post-coital bleeding.

It is also a good treatment when there are persistent low grade smear abnormalities when all of the area can easily be seen with the colposcope.

Cryocautery is a very easy and safe treatment for the patient. It does not hurt (although cramping may occur), and no anaesthetic is required. It can be done in a short time and will not interfere with other activities such as work or school, later in the day.

There is no chance of heavy bleeding afterwards. Serious injuries or complications are almost unheard of.

The procedure

No special preparation is necessary for cryocautery except that it should not be performed during the heavier days of the menstrual period. Some cramping is often felt, so taking ibuprofen or paracetamol beforehand is a good idea.

You may wish to be accompanied during the procedure by your partner or a close friend.

Once you are on the colposcopy couch and the cervix has been visualised, the colposcopist applies a cryoprobe to the cervix and then begins the freeze. The cervix and probe promptly freeze together, and an ice ball begins to form. The freeze lasts for three to five minutes.

During the freeze most women feel a sensation of coldness, and possibly some cramping. It is not usually painful. After a three to five minute freeze the probe is defrosted and removed and the cervix is allowed to thaw for several minutes. The speculum may be removed or left in place (as you wish) during the thaw time.

The freeze is then repeated in exactly the same way as before. When the second freeze is finished, the probe and speculum are removed. You may then get up, get dressed, and leave. You may also go about all your normal activities including work, school and recreation.

After cryocautery

You will experience a heavy discharge for several weeks after cryocautery.

Remember: The discharge after treatment may be worse than the one you came with, but this should improve as the area heals.

We advise that:

- You DO NOT use internal sanitary protection (i.e. tampons) until after your next period
- You DO NOT have intercourse for four weeks
- You DO NOT go swimming for four weeks
- Infection following treatment is rare. However if you have any symptoms, a fever or the discharge is offensive smelling, you may need to see your GP for a prescription of antibiotics.