

# Endometrial assessment clinic

Information for you



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The clinic is situated in the McDonald Suite in the Lister Centre at University Hospital Crosshouse.

It is well sign-posted both inside and outside the hospital.

Please contact the hospital if you cannot keep your appointment or if you have any questions.

**The McDonald Suite is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday - for all other enquiries.**

**Telephone: 01563 827238**

## **What is endometrial assessment?**

The endometrium is the lining of the womb. You are usually referred to the clinic because of one of the following complaints:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding - for example, after the menopause.
- Heavy or irregular periods.
- Misplaced intrauterine contraceptive devices (coil).

The aim of the clinic is to carry out any necessary investigations and discuss your treatment options. You may have one or more of the following investigations carried out:

- Ultrasound scan of the pelvis (this may have been done before you attend this clinic).
- Hysteroscopy to inspect the lining of your womb.
- Biopsy of the lining of your womb.

After your investigations we will discuss your results and treatment with you and make some recommendations. Some women may benefit from a mirena intrauterine device (hormonal coil) and we can fit this at the same visit.

There is a lot to cover so your appointment may take up to an hour. You should be ready to drive or travel by public transport after resting for a few minutes. You may feel able to return to work the same day but do not do any strenuous activity immediately after your appointment. You are welcome to bring someone with you for company.

## **What is an ultrasound scan of the pelvis?**

An ultrasound scan is a painless test that uses sound waves to create images of organs and structures inside your body. It is a very commonly used test and is harmless.

We scan your pelvic organs by either an abdominal ultrasound scan or a vaginal ultrasound scan.

For the abdominal scan your bladder needs to be comfortably full before you attend the clinic. Fluids are available to drink in the waiting area. We will place some jelly onto your tummy and press a probe against your skin to get the images.

Often using a vaginal probe for the ultrasound scan provides a better image. We will ask you to empty your bladder and return to the couch. You should remove your underwear. We will give you a hospital gown to wear. We will place the tip of the probe inside your vagina and gently move it to obtain images of your pelvic organs.

Neither type of scan should be uncomfortable. We will discuss the results of your scan with you at the time of your examination.

## **What is an hysteroscopy?**

This examination takes five to ten minutes and allows the doctor to look inside your womb and inspect the lining (endometrium).

During the examination we will ask you to lie on a special bed with your legs raised and slightly apart. First the doctor will examine the position and size of your uterus by feeling it, then we will clean your vagina and cervix with antiseptic.

We will place a thin telescope (hysteroscope) into your vagina and pass sterile fluid through it to gently separate the walls of your vagina. This allows us to pass the telescope through your cervix (neck of the womb) and into your womb. There is a camera attached to the telescope that allows the doctor to see the inside of the womb.

## **What is a biopsy?**

We may need to carry out a biopsy of the lining of your womb. This is where we remove a small sample of tissue and send it away for closer examination under a microscope. This can be done in two ways:

- Biopsy forceps are passed along the side of the telescope and we take a biopsy while looking through the telescope.
- After removing the hysteroscope we place a fine plastic tube into your womb to take a small sample.

Sometimes we find polyps with the hysteroscope and it may be possible to remove these at the clinic. Similarly, we can see lost coils and remove them.

## **Will I feel any discomfort?**

Most women will feel little or no discomfort. Some women will experience a cramping sensation similar to a period during the hysteroscopy, biopsy or when removing the polyps. The telescopes are very narrow and most women do not find the procedure painful. However, if it is too uncomfortable at any time tell the doctor and we will stop the procedure. These symptoms fade away quickly after the procedure and we can give you mild painkillers at the clinic if you need them. You should be completely back to normal after 48 hours.

## **Are there any risks?**

Hysteroscopy and biopsy are associated with some small risks. Commonly occurring risks include:

- Discomfort
- Slight vaginal bleeding which usually settles in a day or two
- Failure to pass the telescope into the womb and obtain an adequate view

## **Less common risks include:**

- Infection - if you experience a fever, foul smelling vaginal discharge or increasing abdominal pain in the days after your visit, please contact the clinic or your family doctor (GP). To reduce the risk of infection, you should avoid sexual intercourse, using tampons and swimming for one week after your hysteroscopy or biopsy.
- Perforation of the uterus, a small hole in the uterus that usually heals without further treatment.

You will have the opportunity to ask questions before you leave the clinic. If we have taken a sample of the lining of your womb we will send you the results in a letter or make another appointment for you to discuss the results.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the clinic.

**If you are due to have your period when your appointment is due please telephone the clinic to arrange an alternative date.**

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