

**Albany Family Medicine
Community Care Physicians
391 Myrtle Avenue, Suite 4A (4th Floor)
Albany, NY 12208
518-207-2273**

This is a reminder that you are scheduled for a colposcopy.

Reminders for appointment for colposcopy:

1. You may have a support person who is welcome to be with you during the procedure.
2. Plan on minimal activity for several hours after the procedure.
3. Please eat your regular meals before the appointment and take all of your medications as you normally would. You do not need to have an empty stomach for this procedure.
4. Wear comfortable clothing with underwear that will accommodate a pad.
5. You may have mild sedation in the form of a pill. This needs to be arranged in advance. Many people find that this is not necessary, but it is an option. This pill will need to be prescribed to your pharmacy before the appointment and taken about one hour before the procedure, and you will need to have someone accompany you to the office and back home. Please send a portal message to your provider or contact the office if you would like this option.
6. If you need to reschedule your appointment, please call 518-207-2273 at least 24 hours in advance. You do NOT need to reschedule if you are having your period.

What is a colposcopy?

A colposcopy is a procedure using small biopsies that is done for an abnormal result on a Pap test or HPV test. A cervical biopsy is a procedure to remove a small piece of skin from the cervix to test for abnormal or precancerous conditions, or cervical cancer. The cervix is the bottom portion of the uterus that providers can see when they use a speculum to look in the vagina.

A colposcopy may also be recommended if your cervix does not look normal during an exam, or if you have bleeding after intercourse.

How is it done?

After you are brought to the examination room, you will be asked to give a urine sample for a pregnancy test and then we will discuss the procedure, go through the consent form, and answer your questions. After that you will be asked to undress from the waist down.

The provider will place a speculum in the vagina, just like when you get a Pap test. The provider will then look closely at your cervix using a bright light and magnification after applying a liquid

(acetic acid, or vinegar) that makes abnormal tissue easier to see. If the provider sees anything abnormal, they will usually take a biopsy.

What should I do to prepare for a colposcopy?

You do not need to do anything special to prepare for a colposcopy. Colposcopy can be done if you have had sex recently or if you have light bleeding, like the beginning or end of your period. If your bleeding is very heavy, or if you prefer, you may call to reschedule. However, if your provider recommended that you have a colposcopy, it is very important that you complete the procedure as scheduled to avoid any risk of cancer.

What can the results show?

The results of the colposcopy and biopsy can range from normal to, in rare cases, cancer. Most will have either a normal or low-grade result (also called cervical intraepithelial lesion grade 1 or CIN 1). In this case, your provider will usually recommend follow up with a Pap and HPV test in 12 months. This is the most common outcome of a colposcopy.

If the result shows a pre-cancer or cervical dysplasia (also called cervical intraepithelial lesion grade 2 or 3 or CIN 2 or 3), your provider will usually recommend treatment. These treatment is generally a procedure called a LEEP (Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure). It is rare for treatment to be needed; most people will need only follow-up pap smears.

What to Expect After a colposcopy

Most people are able to return to normal activities within 1 to 3 hours after a colposcopy is performed. Recovery time depends on how much was done during the procedure.

- Mild cramping may occur for several hours after the procedure. Ibuprofen is very helping in relieving this type of cramping.
- A dark brown vaginal discharge or spotting during the first week is normal.
- Pads should be used instead of tampons for about 4 days.
- Sexual intercourse should be avoided for about 4 days.
- Douching should be avoided for about 4 days.

YOU SHOULD CALL YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER IF YOU HAVE:

- Fever >101° F
- Bright red, heavy bleeding which is more than what you have with your period
- Bad cramps or pain that does not improve with over-the-counter medications, such as ibuprofen
- Bad-smelling, yellowish vaginal discharge