



## What is Colposcopy?

Colposcopy is a practice used in conjunction with the pap test to diagnose abnormalities of the female reproductive organs, primarily the cervix and vagina. It is used most frequently if the pap test results suggest that further examination is prudent. However, as it is a visual examination technique, the doctor can elect to do a Colposcopic examination at any time.

## How is it done?

Colposcopy is conducted with an instrument called a Colposcope, which is basically a microscope on a stand. Suitably illuminated, it provides a magnified look at the female genitalia: that is, the vulva, vagina, and cervix, showing much greater details than can be seen by the naked eye. The magnification is up to 20 times normal size and to make abnormal areas even more distinguishable, the cervix is swabbed with a special solution prior to the visual examination.

## Is it painful?

The Colposcopic examination is virtually free of pain. Should a biopsy be necessary, it can be done in the doctor's office. Using the Colposcope, the doctor can see and pinpoint exactly where any abnormality may occur avoiding other surgical exploration techniques. The use of the Colposcope is not painful nor will it in any way affect a woman or her child bearing capabilities.

## How often should it be done?

The frequency of Colposcopic examination varies and is solely at the doctor's discretion. Some patients may require regular Colposcopic examinations, others only if suspicious results of other tests indicate its use.

## Is it covered by insurance?

Most insurance companies consider this in the same category as other diagnostic examinations and pay accordingly to their policies for this category. Your doctor or her staff can advise how this applies in your particular circumstance.