



Cervical Diathermy

(LLETZ procedure) or
(Cautery to the cervix)

What you need to know



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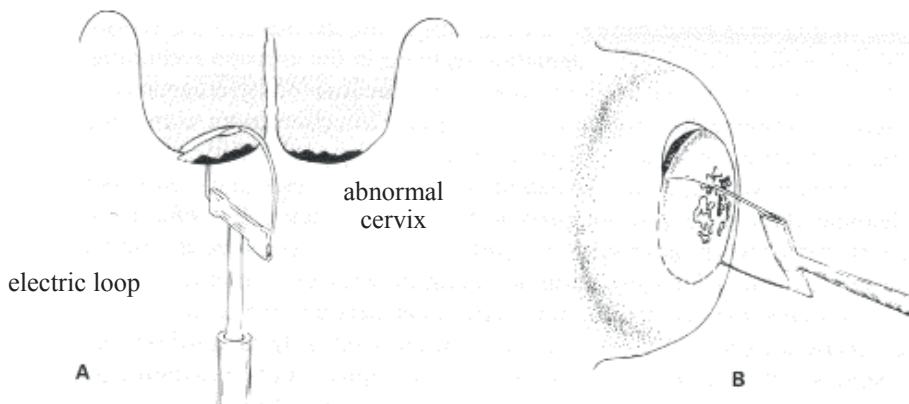
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CERVICAL CAUTERY or LLETZ

THE PROCEDURE

I have recommended you to have a diathermy (cautery) to your cervix or LLETZ. The procedure is performed either under general anaesthesia in hospital. The procedure involves either destruction of the abnormal tissue (cautery) or excising the abnormal part of your cervix by producing an electrical current to cut the tissues (LLETZ). Prior to the procedure, depending on your individual circumstances, the cervix may need to be examined once again to get a close-up view of the surface of the cervix. This is done by a colposcope (a magnifying instrument); I have already performed this on you with your initial abnormal smear.

The cervix is then cauterised, using electrical current, and all the abnormal areas are excised or destroyed. The procedure takes about 15 to 30 minutes. Often I will also perform a curette (D&C) to make sure there are no abnormal areas above the operated area.



LLETZ procedure

COMMON REASONS FOR CERVICAL DIATHERMY

1. Abnormal pap smear which has been fully evaluated by colposcopy prior to surgery. Remember the papsmear abnormality is a **PRE-cancer** **NOT** a cancer and often will be cured after the operation.
2. Chronic cervical inflammation. Cervicitis (“Erosion” or “Ulcer”) especially if it is associated with.
 - (a) Repeated vaginal infections or vaginal irritations and all other measures (creams etc) have proved unsuccessful
 - (b) Bleeding after sexual intercourse
 - (c) Persistent vaginal discharge requiring you to wear protection all the time.

RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS OF THE PROCEDURE

Serious complications from this procedure are **unlikely**. The risks include the following:

- Severe cramping. This may last for 1 or 2 days but will settle down.
- Heavy bleeding. This usually lasts 2-3 days and is usually light bleeding. It may last up to 2 weeks.
- Pelvic infection. Usually occurs within 24 hours and causes pain, tenderness and fever or excessive bleeding.
- Narrowing of the cervical opening which may lead to period pains in the future (*late complication may occur 2-3 months after procedure*).
- Accidental burning of normal vaginal tissue. (*extremely rare*)
- Cervical incompetence. Very rarely, if you fall pregnant soon after the procedure, there is an increased risk of miscarriage. You may require a cervical suture if this is the case

YOUR RECOVERY

You should not drive or make important decisions for 24 hours after your surgery, particularly if you have had a general anaesthetic.

The most common symptom after the procedure is mild cramping and mild bleeding. This can be relieved by medications. (Nurofen, Naprogesic, Naprosyn etc).

As the cervix heals you may notice one or more of the following:

- Mild vaginal bleeding or brownish discharge which may last up to 3 weeks
- Heavier bleeding during your next period.

PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE DURING YOUR RECOVERY

Your cervix will heal more adequately if you observe the following precautions for the first 3 weeks.

- **Avoid sexual intercourse** until I review you.
- Do not insert tampons. Use pads instead (At least for the 1st 3 weeks)
- Avoid baths. Have showers only
- No heavy lifting.
- No vigorous exercise.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT

I would like to see you again in about 3 to 4 weeks time.

You will need to ring my rooms to make this appointment as soon as practical to make a follow up appointment.

URGENT APPOINTMENT

There may be times when I may need to see you earlier. Be sure to call my rooms or contact me, if you experience any one of the following and make an **urgent** appointment to see me, see your local doctor or go to Campbelltown Hospital casualty and get the doctor to contact me:

- Heavy bleeding or bleeding with clots.
- Severe abdominal pain and cramping.
- Fever.
- Foul smelling discharge.

