

THE NORFOLK AND NORWICH POSTMENOPAUSAL BLEEDING CLINIC (PMB CLINIC)

Why have I been referred?

Women are often referred to the PMB clinic if they have experienced vaginal bleeding after the menopause or if there has been unexpected bleeding whilst taking hormonal replacement therapy (HRT). The vast majority of the women referred will have no abnormality and can be discharged after a single visit to the clinic. In a small number of patients there may be a serious cause for the bleeding such as endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the womb).

The appointment

The appointment will consist of a consultation with a specialist nurse followed by an ultrasound examination and vaginal examination. If for any reason you are unable to attend your appointment please phone 01603 287627.

Who will see me?

The clinic is run by a team of specialist nurses, led by Mrs Saadia Naeem, (Consultant Gynaecologist).

Telephone consultation

Prior to your appointment one of the specialist nurses will contact you via telephone to undertake a consultation and explain what examinations will be required at your appointment. This will take place in the days leading up to your appointment. You will have an opportunity to ask any questions and will need to give verbal consent for any examination or tests to be performed.

The ultrasound examination

An ultrasound scan will be performed by the specialist nurse sonographer. You will be asked to undress from the waist downwards. This is done in private where you will be seated on a special couch with leg rests and covered with a sheet. A small probe, protected by a cover, will be inserted gently into your vagina so that your uterus (womb) can be clearly seen. A precise measurement of the thickness of the lining of your uterus is taken along with a general assessment of the pelvis. It is not usually uncomfortable.

The examination

The examination will take place after the ultrasound scan. The nurse will use a speculum to assess the vagina and cervix, if needed an endometrial biopsy will take place at this point.

Biopsy

Depending on the results of the ultrasound scan, sometimes we may recommend taking a biopsy (small sample of tissue) from the lining of your womb. A speculum is used, which is the same device used to take cervical smears. A thin suction tube is passed through the neck of the womb to collect some of the cells.

You may feel period-like cramping pain during the procedure. These will be helped by you taking two 200mg tablets (400mg total) of Ibuprofen 2 hours before your appointment if you are not asthmatic or allergic to Ibuprofen or aspirin. If you are asthmatic or allergic to this medication two 500mg Paracetamol tablets (1000mg total) 2 hours beforehand will also help.

You can expect some light bleeding for the next few days. The sample is sent to the laboratory for analysis. If it is not possible to get a sample the nurse will discuss with you what may then be necessary. This may require a procedure called outpatient hysteroscopy. An outpatient hysteroscopy is a simple procedure that involves inserting a small telescope through the neck of the womb and examining the cavity of the womb. A biopsy from womb lining can be obtained at the same time.

At the end of the examination

The nurse will explain the findings of the assessment and the follow up plan.

After the visit

If you have had a biopsy, you may have mild period-type pain and light bleeding for a short time. Pain relief such as paracetamol should be all that you need. You will be able to resume your normal activities. The results will be available in two to three weeks when you will be advised by letter whether treatment or further tests are necessary. Please contact the PMB specialist nurse team if you have any concerns or there is a delay in receiving your results.

Telephone number: 01603 286821 / 01603 287493

This phone is not always directly manned. There is an answer phone available; please leave a message and one of the nurses will get back to you as soon as able.

