

Vulval Biopsy

Why do I need a vulval biopsy?

A vulval biopsy is performed to find out what is causing your symptoms. It is not always possible to know what is causing a skin problem just by looking. If this is the case, a biopsy can help to identify the problem and suggest suitable treatment. A biopsy is particularly important to establish if vulval skin changes are due to cancer.

What is a vulval biopsy?

A biopsy is the removal of a small piece of skin from the affected area of the vulva. The tissue is then examined under a microscope by a pathologist.

What happens when I have the biopsy?

An injection of local anaesthetic is given to numb the area so you should feel no pain, but you may feel a little discomfort during the procedure. The biopsied area may be sealed with silver nitrate or stitches.

After this procedure:

If stitches are required these will dissolve/ fall out on their own in 10 – 14 days and generally do not need to be removed. If silver nitrate has been used you may notice a silvery black discharge from the biopsy site.

You may notice a slight bloody discharge from the biopsy site and may need to use a panty liner to protect your underwear.

It is usual to experience slight soreness in the area for a few days. This can be relieved by painkillers and a warm bath or shower.

It is important to keep the area clean and dry to prevent problems with infection. A daily bath or shower is recommended during the week after the procedure. Pat the area dry gently with a clean towel.

You may find loose clothing is more comfortable for the first few days after biopsy.

Vigorous exercise is best avoided to avoid chaffing and irritation of the area.

It is advisable to refrain from sex for the first week after the biopsy, to avoid irritation and allow the area to heal.

Please contact your GP or cley gynaecology ward on **01603287242** for advice if:

- You notice that the wound becomes increasingly painful, and/ or discharges. This may suggest that you have an infection.
- You bleed heavily from the incision site.

How will I find out the biopsy result?

You will be informed of the results and whether any further treatment is required, either by letter or at the gynaecology clinic.