

## Colposcopy Outpatients Patient Information



The Information Standard Certified Member

# Information

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Publication Date: 09/15  
Review Date: 09/17

## What is Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia (CIN)?

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### What is CIN?

- Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia or CIN for short are changes seen on the cervix (neck of the womb) detected at Colposcopy.
- They can be detected by the doctor or nurse looking at the cervix with a microscope and applying certain solutions (colposcopy). It can also be detected by taking a small biopsy (small piece of tissue) from the cervix, which is sent to the pathology department to be examined.
- The term CIN relates to changes seen in the outer layer of skin on the cervix. This is not cancer.
- There are different grades of CIN according to how severe the changes are. These range from CIN1 (minor changes) to CIN3 (the most severe changes).
- We know that most cases of CIN1 will go back to normal without any treatment. If your doctor or nurse has told you that we have detected CIN1, she/he will usually suggest that you have a repeat smear at your GP surgery in 6-12 months.
- The risk of developing cancer from CIN1 is very small indeed. However, if the abnormality of CIN1 persists after several visits to colposcopy your doctor or nurse will often offer you treatment to return your smears to normal.
- We know from many studies that some CIN2 and CIN3 may develop into cancer many years in the future. If you have CIN2 you may be offered treatment or we may monitor the cervix. All women with CIN3 are offered treatment.

## What causes CIN?

You may have heard that CIN and cervical cancer are caused by a virus infection called HPV (Human Papilloma Virus). While it is true that virtually all women with CIN and cervical cancer have had HPV infection, the majority of women with HPV do not have any disease of the cervix.

HPV infection is extremely common but very rarely causes CIN or cancer.

We know there are many other factors that contribute to developing CIN, in particular smoking. It is sometimes possible to reverse the abnormal changes on the cervix by stopping smoking.

## HPV (Human Papilloma Virus)

- Your doctor may have told you that your smear result has shown Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).
- HPV is a very common virus, which very rarely causes abnormalities on the cervix (neck of the womb) or cervical cancer. There are many different types of HPV virus and it is most commonly detected on your cervical smear.
- Any woman who is sexually active may have HPV and like many viruses it can come and go throughout your life.
- There are many different types of this virus and some are more likely than others to predispose you to abnormalities on the cervix.

## Prevention

- It is possible to reduce the risk of acquiring HPV by using a condom
- Stop smoking. Free help and support is available at LiveWell Dorset. Telephone 0800 8401628.
- If you have any questions or concerns about this please ask a member of the Colposcopy staff

## Contact Telephone Numbers:

- Dorset County Hospital (Switchboard): 01305 251150
- Colposcopy Appointments: 01305 255729
- Colposcopy Nurse: 01305 254239

