Colposcopy is a procedure to closely examine your cervix, vagina or vulva for abnormalities. These abnormalities often account for problems detected on a pap smear and are usually caused by the Human Papilloma Virus or HPV. During a colposcopy your doctor will uses a special instrument called a colposcope. Many women experience anxiety before their colposcopy. The University of Michigan Health System Colposcopy Clinic staff wants to reduce these types of concerns, knowing exactly what to expect at your appointment may help with this. We suggest that you use your local library, internet or education center to learn about; colposcopy, human papilloma virus, and types of abnormal pap test results. Write down any questions or concerns you have about the procedure. The nurses and physicians in the colposcopy clinic are happy to answer your questions before your colposcopy begins.

**Reason for procedure**

A colposcopy is recommended by your doctor or practitioner if you have a pap test that is abnormal, HPV is found in your pap specimen or if during your examine gynecologic tissue appears abnormal.
How to prepare
Do not schedule your colposcopy during your period. Do not have vaginal intercourse within 48-72 hours before your appointment. Do not use tampons 48-72 hours before your appointment. Take an over the counter pain reliever such as Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) one hour before your appointment.

During the Colposcopy
A colposcopy is usually done in a doctors office, the procedure takes 10-20 minutes. You lie on an exam table on your back with your feet in supports (Just like during a pelvic exam or pap test). The doctor places a metal speculum in your vagina; this will allow your doctor to see your cervix and vagina. For a vulva colposcopy there is no need to use the speculum however many women will have a cervical or vaginal colposcopy with a vulva colposcopy. Your cervix, vagina or vulva will be swabbed with a cotton tip swab to clear away any mucus. Your doctor will apply vinegar or iodine solution to the cervix, vagina or vulva. This may cause a burning or tingling sensation. The solution helps highlight any areas of abnormal cells. The colposcope is positioned a few inches away from your vagina. Your doctor will look through the lens of the colposcope (as if using binoculars). If your doctor finds areas of abnormal cells a small sample of tissue may be collected to be sent to the laboratory. A biopsy instrument is used to collect this sample. Your doctor will make every effort to minimize pain and discomfort caused from taking a biopsy or biopsies.


After the Colposcopy
If no biopsy was taken you may experience some spotting or very light bleeding from the vagina for 2-4 days after your colposcopy. If a biopsy was taken during your colposcopy you will be provided with instructions that include symptoms that are normal as well as symptoms that are abnormal. You will be given phone number to the clinic and the phone number to the paging system where you can reach a Gynecology doctor if problems occur after clinic hours or over the weekend/holiday.

Test Results
Biopsy results will be available in 5-7 hospital business days. Pap test results take longer 7-14 hospital business days. The results of your colposcopy, biopsy/biopsies, and pap test will determine whether you need further testing and or treatment. If all your results are normal, you will be notified with a letter that contains results and your doctor's recommendations regarding follow up appointments. If abnormalities are found your office will contact you by telephone with results and your doctor plan for treatment or follow up care. If you have not received a call or letter 3 weeks after your colposcopy appointment and a pap test and or biopsy was taken, please call the clinic at (734) 647-8906.