

Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP) Information Sheet

General indications for the proposed procedure/treatment:

If the patient has an abnormal Pap test result, the doctor may suggest that she has a loop electrosurgical excision procedure (LEEP) as part of the evaluation or for treatment. LEEP is used to remove the area containing abnormal cells from the cervix.

Description of Procedure:

LEEP is one way to remove abnormal cells from the cervix. The decision of which method to use depends on how much cervical tissue needs to be removed and where on the cervix the abnormal cells are located.

LEEP uses a thin wire loop that acts like a scalpel (surgical knife). An electric current is passed through the loop, which cuts away a thin layer of the cervix.

The procedure should be done when the patient is not having their menstrual period to give a better view of the cervix. In most cases, LEEP is done in a doctor's office. The procedure only takes a few minutes.

During the procedure the patient will lie on their back and place their legs in stirrups. The doctor then will insert a *speculum* into the vagina in the same way as for a pelvic exam. Local *anesthesia* will be used to prevent pain. It is given through a needle attached to a syringe. The patient may feel a slight sting, then a dull ache or cramp. The loop is inserted into the vagina to the cervix. There are different sizes and shapes of loops that can be used. The patient may feel faint during the procedure. If faintness is felt, tell the doctor immediately.

After the procedure, a special paste may be applied to the cervix to stop any bleeding. *Electrocautery* also may be used to control bleeding. The tissue that is removed will be studied in a lab to confirm the diagnosis.

Risk of the Procedure:

The most common risk in the first 3 weeks after a LEEP is heavy bleeding. If the patient has heavy bleeding, contact the doctor. The patient may need to have more of the paste applied to the cervix to stop the bleeding.

LEEP has been associated with an increased risk of future pregnancy problems. Although most women have no problems, there is a small increase in the risk of premature births and having a low birth weight baby. In rare cases, the cervix is narrowed after the procedure. This narrowing may cause problems with menstruation. It also may make it difficult to become pregnant

Procedure Alternatives, if any:

Procedure alternatives include *cryosurgery*, *laser treatment*, and *cone biopsy*.

Probable consequences of Refusing Procedure:

The probable consequence of refusing this procedure is that abnormal cells will not be removed from the cervix which could lead to future complications.

Person(s) Performing the Procedure:

The key portions of the procedure will be performed by a physician who is a member of the medical staff of Rush University Medical Center and/or a resident/fellow who is observed by a physician who is a member of the medical staff. Residents/Fellows are licensed physicians in approved residency or post residency training programs. Parts of the procedure which they perform will be based on their level of competency.