

CERVICAL CONIZATION (CONE BIOPSY)

Cervical conization is both a diagnostic and treatment tool used to detect and treat abnormalities of the cervix.

The cervix, just like your skin and many other surfaces, is covered with tissue that is continuously being replaced. As the cells on the top become “old” and are shed, cells from below move to the surface and replace them. The Papanicolaou smear, commonly referred to as a “Pap Smear”, is a test that collects the cells of the cervix that are to be shed and examines them with a microscope. When normal cells are replaced with abnormal cells, a condition known as *dysplasia* has developed. Areas of dysplasia on the cervix are considered premalignant (pre-cancerous). Dysplasia can go away on its own, remain unchanged, or become more concerning and may lead to cancer.

Risk factors for abnormal findings on Pap smear and cervical biopsy are thought to include any one or a combination of:

- Vaginal infection, with bacteria, yeast and/or other non-sexually transmitted or sexually transmitted organisms
- Cervicitis, inflammation of the cervix caused by such factors as chemical exposure (such as soaps, douches, deodorized tampons, and spermicides), exposure to a foreign body (such as a diaphragm, cervical cap, or pessary) or vaginal infection
- Viral infection, including a variety of Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) strains, and in particular high-risk (ability to cause abnormal cellular growth) HPV strains
- Compromised immune states, such as pregnancy, chronic steroid use, immunosuppression following organ transplant, and HIV/AIDS

Cervical conization is an outpatient procedure that is usually performed after a precancerous condition is found on cervical biopsy. Cervical conization also may be performed if there is an abnormality detected on your pap test or if the result of your cervical biopsy and colposcopy (examination of the cervix with magnification) do not adequately explain the result of your abnormal Pap test.

Treatment of cervical dysplasia can be divided into ablative (destructive) and excisional (cutting out) techniques. Your doctor will make recommendations for treatment based on your history, Pap smear, colposcopy, and biopsy.